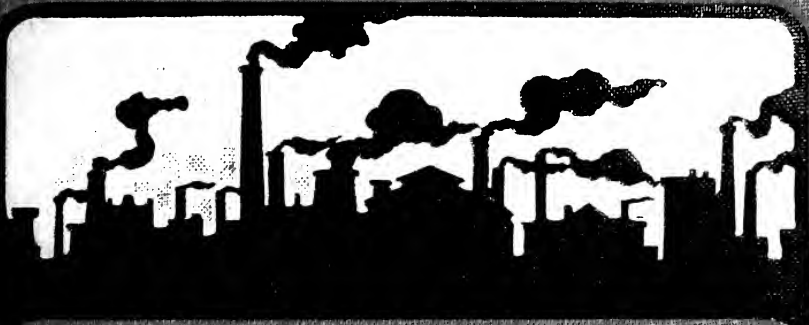

SOME ETHICAL PHASES *of the* LABOR QUESTION

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RELIGION IN RELATION TO SOCIOLOGY.

I

RELIGION IN RELATION TO SOCIOLOGY.

If we depend upon lexicographers for a definition of religion, we find that it comprehends a belief in the being and perfection of God, in the revelation of his will to man, in man's obligation to obey his commands, and in man's accountableness to God; and it also includes true godliness, or purity of life, with the practice of all moral duties. If we do not undertake to square religion with dogmatic theological thought and teaching, we shall come to the conclusion that, as distinct from theology, religion is godliness, or real purity in practice, consisting of the performance of all known duties to God and our fellow-men and ourselves. If we search the heart and the conscience, this will be the outcome. We shall agree with Fichte, that religion is "faith in

a moral government of the world," and that without it "morality is superstition, which deceives the unfortunate with a false hope and makes them incapable of improvement." We shall agree, too, with Kant, that religion is "reverence for the moral law as of divine command," and with Dr. Martineau, that religion is the "culminating meridian of morals." Still, we shall go beyond this, and recognize in religion, pure and simple and undefiled, the great moving force which underlies the formation of our characters, determines our action, not only as to self, but as to others, teaches us the rules of right and wrong, and that through character and conduct we show our sense of responsibility and of our accountableness to God and to our fellow-man, in the latter finding the practical work in which we can show the greatest honor to God and the greatest and highest comprehension of our best emotions.

If we consult the lexicographer again, we shall find that sociology is the science of social phenomena,— the science which investigates the laws regulating human society ;

the science which treats of the general structure of society, the laws of its development, the progress of civilization, and all that relates to society. If we go to our own hearts and experiences, sociology becomes something different from a science. It becomes a habit of social relations,— the moral attitude of man to man, the comprehension of the methods and processes by which men grow out of self and into serviceableness to their fellows. It is, in a religious and an ethical sense, the soul of society, with man as the expression of the soul, and the means and the vehicle by which the soul of society works out the redemption of its material elements; and ethics, which is not religion, but which is not ethics unless stimulated by it, means the truest, the highest, the divinest relations of men in society.

Again, we shall conclude that sociology deals with the institutions which enable society to perform its infinitely varied functions, that every feature of society which comprehends the action of a group of individual units represents some institution,

and without regard to the theory which may be adopted to account for the origin and development of society; for, whatever that origin may have been, all organizations having the purpose of regulation, government, or defence are institutions created by individuals in their relations to each other. Thus customs, laws, habits, traditions, religions,— everything that represents the action of men in groups,— are institutions in a sociological sense.

With these definitions we can appreciate the facetious answer of a student when asked, What is sociology? He said it was an aspiration; and, while the answer was given to slur the science of sociology as something nebulous and incomprehensible, it has in it great truth. For the aim of society in all its regulations is to reach an ideal state, in which all units, individual and social, shall be happy, and shall in their methods conduce to the happiness of all.

Religion is something more than an aspiration. It is a hope. In it and through it and by it the human race has always

looked for the sublimest consummation of life,—that spiritual happiness which comes through the hope of eternal welfare, which comes through the hope of a relation to God that shall make the man of hope something more than human: something divine. Religion and sociology, therefore, with this comprehension, compass the highest elements of correlated forces. They involve an interweaving of interests and a recognition of a common source of existence of action and of ultimate end. Neither religion nor sociology can be studied alone, independently of the other. They must be studied side by side as correlated forces, each acting upon the other, each determining the destiny of man, and hence of society.

The earlier writers on sociology framed their works upon what is known as the materialistic or biological theory of society,—that society is an organism, developed on the cellular plan, like the human organism. The later writers do not consider this theory adequate to account for social organization; and they have advanced the theory that so-

ciety is the result of psychic forces,— of what Dr. Giddings characterizes "the consciousness of kind." If later writers are correct,— and they seem to me to be so,— religion must have played an important part in the evolution of society as a psychic force; for the emotional nature of man is one of the principal elements of religious nature, which is emotional in the highest sense, as it relates to the deeper spiritual, and even the supernatural, tendencies of the human mind.

Dr. Albion W. Small, a philosopher, a sociologist, and a believer in the deepest religious life and in the influence of the teachings of religion, concludes that sociologists are, in the first place, subjecting social facts to such minute analyses that all science will be better understood; second, that they are trying to untangle the complexities of the social process in all times and places, so that we may presently teach men how to find themselves in that portion of the process which is working out in their particular environment; third, that they are explaining

the operation of social forces and formulating the laws of their workings, so that we may presently know better what resources are available for human tasks and how they may be most effectively applied; fourth, that they are trying to find standards for judgment about the social products of one time as compared with those of other times, so that we may take more accurate account of our stock of social achievements; and, fifth,— and here is the deepest philosophy of Dr. Small's analysis,— that sociologists are trying to discover in the facts of social conditions and resources material out of which to construct more concrete and specific and coherent ideals of the appropriate aims of human endeavor.* Dr. Small's article on "The Valüe of Sociology to Working Pastors" is commended.

The great question arises, What kind of materials must be used to enable us to construct more concrete, specific, and coherent ideals of the appropriate aims of human endeavor? And the answer must be that an

* Cf. the *Outlook*, June 17, 1899.

ideal state of society is to be found only when religious elements predominate; for, in studying sociology, we are searching for the philosophy of life, and both the religionist and the sociologist find that, no matter when society began, no matter when social combinations first began to organize their forces, religion played a prominent initiative part. There has been no race in its primeval days, with or without organizations, that has not had its religious ceremonials, with their deep and lasting influence upon the purpose, character, and results of their associations. It does not matter how crude or how repulsive these ceremonials may appear to us now, they were the deepest expressions of the religious elements of man at one time.

We now believe that some forms of theological dogma are simply the result of the superstitious religions found in the crudest races of men. A God or a number of gods have always had possession of the minds of men. We believe in one immanent God, the source of all intelligence, who is all in-

telligence. This only raises us in the standard of religious culture and, I believe, in the power of religious force. We apply our religious culture to the shaping of human events, to the formation of human enterprise, to the building of character, to the purpose of human organizations, and hence to the real purpose of society itself. We have grown out of savagery and barbarism and superstition in some degree; but that degree is immense when we compare the present with the far past, and whether we are dealing with society or with religion as a force in society.

The struggles of men assume a different phase as the development of religious belief goes on, the development of social relations accompanying the religious development. We are just beginning to comprehend the living Christ in all the relations of men,—the Christ who lived before the Christian era, and who has had a living personality since then. We believe more and more in the true essence of religion, which is the absolute foundation of the very best society.

This is found in the utterance, "Bear ye one another's burdens." But this sentiment is as old as creation, as new as to-day. While all the races, crude and cultured, have had their God or gods, all races have had their Christs; and the Christ idea in social development has been summed up in the command, "What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others," as the inspiration of the Chinese philosopher five hundred years before our own great Master, when from his inspiration came the command, "Do unto others as ye would that others would do unto you." The Christ of the Buddhists gave the world the same inspiration; and so did Seneca, and so did Kant. I have just read in a book entitled *Better World Philosophy* that this is the injunction which has been proclaimed by the sublimest souls that have pondered and agonized over the sins of beings. The injunction is to put yourself in the place of others. It is consideration of others as ardent as consideration of self. It is the balancing of abilities, the social ideal.* So

* Cf. *Better World Philosophy*, J. Howard Moore, p. 194.

in the great command of the greatest teacher of divine truth the world has ever seen, and of inspired teachers before and since his birth and death,— the command, "Bear ye one another's burdens,"— religion and sociology find their deepest expression and their truest harmony.

But sociology deals with practical problems, with the great difficulties constantly besetting governments as the highest representations of social organization. How shall we deal with the poor and those needing the assistance of the well-to-do? Crude charity, as a sociological force, says they must be assisted. Religion, as a divine force, gives charity the first place in human qualities. Religion and sociology, making a scientific study of this very difficulty in human relations, teach us that there is as much danger in benevolence and philanthropy as in the neglect of philanthropic and benevolent impulses. Experience, examination, and research show that crude charity is a menace to society. We throw many young men and women into penal institutions by our benevo-

lent acts by bringing them up in reformatory and charitable institutions until old enough to earn their own living, and then sending them out into the world without the knowledge or the technical skill by which they can sustain themselves. More enlightened religion and more scientific sociology will right this wrong, and teach the true method under which men shall be equipped for life-work, and not simply educated to become public wards. Religion has invaded the prison, sociology has furnished the facts, and the religious heart, allied to sociological science, has developed penology into the science of reclamation. Religion has forgotten the wrathful God under which society justified itself in avenging its wrongs upon the wrongdoer, and has taught the world that the only true method is to treat the prisoner as a morally sick man, under the obligation that he shall be returned to society supplied with the knowledge the deficiency in which in a majority of cases brought him to the prison.

Religion is reaching out into sociological lines in other directions. It is putting its

hand upon government and upon all the integral elements of government. It is influencing the individual units of society, so that by their development and by their culture the government itself shall be as pure as its source,— a long struggle, to be sure; but religion and sociology as allied forces, or, as a better expression, religion as a force in determining sociological work, is bringing about the regeneration.

Sociology has as one of its departments political economy; and, although the economists resent all encroachments of religion or deny the existence of religion as a force in political economy, it is, nevertheless, an assured fact that religion is making a new political economy. The Ruskin school is increasing its student roll, and that increased student roll is developing new elements in the political and economic relations of man. We can join with Henry D. Lloyd in his enthusiasm when he declares that there is a new political economy, which looks first to the care and culture of men; that there is a new self-interest of

the individual, who puts his family before himself, his country before his family, mankind before his country, because there is filtering into his conscience the vast fact that his share of what is done for him by mankind is of far more value to him than what he does for himself. This new political economy, which Mr. Lloyd describes as a new self-interest of the community, and which is going into the slums, factories, mines, and workshops, desires to make all safe by making its weakest safe; and Mr. Lloyd closes with the statement that there is a new state,— the organized body of Christ,— which feeds the hungry, heals the sick, and visits those in prison, and gathers up the children,— a new religion, in fact, a religion of progress, and of man as a partner in the creation of that progress, creating new ideas, new species of plants and animals, new men, and new society. In this light, can we deny the force of religion in shaping our sociological work? Patriotism is born of religion, and patriotism is a power in the development of society; but in religion is found the very

fundamental principle of patriotism,— that is, loyalty to a principle, loyalty to country, and, through loyalty to country, loyalty to God.

A German evangelical, Rudolph Todt, in applying physiological science to society, finds that political economy is the anatomy which makes known the construction of the body social; that socialism is the pathology that describes the maladies of society, and that the church represents the therapeutics that prescribe the proper remedies. And on the title-page of his book he has inscribed the following: "Whoever would understand the social question, and wishes to aid in solving it, must have on his right hand the works on political economy, on his left those on scientific socialism, and before him must keep open the New Testament."

How emphatically true it is that by the adoption of this principle the labor question, with all its ramifications, is lifted to a higher plane than the mere consideration of some of the narrow tenets which have accompanied its discussion! The hours of labor,

the question of wages, in this light do not constitute the labor question, but the great struggle of humanity to secure a higher standard of living, to be able to indulge in the spiritual affairs of life,— those affairs that are above and beyond the mere contest for subsistence. And in the settlement of labor difficulties — the contests between labor and capital as represented by laborers and capitalists — this principle is the only one that can have any effective or lasting influence. Very many strikes and lockouts are the result of close observance of David Harum's golden rule for the horse-trader,— "Do unto the other fellow as you think the other fellow is going to do unto you, and do it fust." When this jockey rule in labor matters is displaced by the true Golden Rule, labor wars will cease, or be carried on purely on ethical and economic lines, avoiding those disastrous personal conflicts which not only interfere with business, as represented by the parties involved, but disturb the whole community. The labor question can be treated or solved only by

Mr. Dole's *Coming People*,— people who apply religion and knowledge at the same time to a specific question.

We must adopt the therapeutics taught by religion. We must understand the maladies of society through sociological science. Each teaches that the greatest enemy of the human race, as well as the greatest impelling force to human progress and civilization, is selfishness. The egoism of man has carried him into the worst crimes, both individually and collectively, the world has ever witnessed. Egoism has also carried him into the sublimest altruism and into the most aggressive movements for the benefit of the race at large. There is no act of altruism that has not in it the elements of selfishness. Religion would teach us that the selfishness or the egoism shall be of the purest quality, — shall be that selfishness which demands of a man such service as shall increase the happiness of those for whom it is intended as much as for his own happiness. Man lives by competitive force. He desires to win in the race. Religion teaches him that

his service must be for humanity, and not for himself alone. It teaches that his restlessness, which was born when man came on the earth, must be shaped, guided, and used in the interest of all.

So we can draw living principles from all the reformers, of whatever name or distinction, the world has ever seen. The socialist teaches that society should be conducted on the basis of demanding from each man according to his ability and giving to each according to his needs,—a doctrine which has in it the essence of Christ's command, but which is dangerous unless intelligently carried out. The facts of sociology teach us the results of reckless adhesion to it; while religion, on the other hand, teaches us the great benefits of its intelligent adoption in the light of the principles of the Christian religion.

Man is full of faults. Sociology undertakes to reveal the faults of man in his social relations, not in a theological sense, but in a practical sense. The application of the true essence of religion is correcting

these faults, and making the very passions of men forcible in the service of God.

It is not my province to speak to the clergy of the necessity of knowledge in the science of sociology; but it may be intimated that the pulpit is not a lyceum, is not a platform for the especial discussion of sociological questions, but that it is and should be a medium of instruction in those deep, practical, religious principles which, applied to ordinary, every-day human affairs, will lead to a better understanding, to a truer reform than we have seen, and to the enlightenment of men. The attempt to apply religion to sociological conditions, without a knowledge of all that the science of sociology can disclose in any particular direction, comes very near being an intellectual, if not a moral, crime. The pulpit is the place for the deepest religious instruction; but, as the deepest religious instruction means the welfare of the human race in its social relations, the pulpit has a power for good or evil in this direction which cannot be estimated. Let

the teaching of the pulpit be in the light of actual sociological science, and then the broadest and the most satisfactory results will be reached. Whoever undertakes to study science in any department, whether geology or sociology or biology or anthropology, without understanding the religious interpretation of the facts which these sciences disclose, falls short of his duty, falls short in his comprehension of the real, living Christ that pervades all elements of all society and all revelations of science.

II

THE RELATION OF POLITICAL ECONOMY TO THE LABOR QUESTION.

II

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In the preceding chapter the general principles of sociology, considered in the light of religion, have been promulgated. These principles form the treatment of this chapter, in which I shall speak of the demands labor is making or will make upon political economy.

The labor question, a short term for the evolution of industrial forces, includes a wide range of sociological studies, a general treatment of which would be impossible. I shall not, therefore, undertake to discuss the labor question in its comprehensiveness, but only a phase of it. One must not, however, consider the matters I do not touch to be held in my own estimation as unimportant. I simply treat a side I have considered to some

extent, fully recognizing the paramount importance of those features I cannot even mention.

The term "labor question" is used as representing the problem of working people in their struggle to secure a higher standard of living, but in this place it is used in a limited sense and as embracing the wants of the wage-laborer, or in a general way as representing the discussion of the just and equitable distribution of profits, or the products of labor and capital. In this are to be found the vital elements of the labor question, whether from an economic or an ethical point of view. Political economists grow very learned and even fascinating over the wages question, but usually on entirely economic grounds; while the just distribution of profits can best be discussed upon grounds covering both economics and ethics, for justice and equity are involved in the consideration of the subject.

A just distribution of profits, by which support and provision for old age may be secured, depends much more upon the cost of living,

habits of frugality, temperance, good morals, sanitary conditions, educational privileges, and various forces of a moral nature than upon purely economical conditions. We must therefore view the whole superstructure in looking at the labor question, and not merely the economic shingles of the edifice.

If I were speaking from the pulpit, and wished to frame a compound subject from language taken from Scripture, I should say, Whatsoever ye sow, that also shall ye reap, and he that is faithful over a few things shall be made ruler over many. At least, the principles underlying the sayings from which such a subject would be drawn apply most forcibly to the consideration of the relations of employers and employed, and of each to society.

During the past one hundred and twenty years, political economy, as a separate branch of philosophy, has sprung into existence. The age has been one of material progress. Economics has ruled almost at the expense of ethics, although the same age has seen wonderful structures of charitable and educational design grow into existence. The strides civ-

ilization has made command our admiration, and its onward steps are marked by numerous and convincing evidences; but such evidences are outside the science of political economy, and are only considered by it as the cost may enter into the distribution of wealth it seeks to create, but not as means for a happier and better condition wherein wealth could be more successfully produced.

Material progress has surpassed that of the arts, painting and sculpture, and literature, for they live as well in the past; and present efforts are rather to approach and equal than to excel the productions of old.

Under the spur of this progress political economy has flourished, — first, by the patronage and through the admiration of all classes. England gave it birth, and to it, her writers claim, she owes her industrial position in the past. It may be that to a too blind following of later teachings she owes to-day the partial loss of her old industrial supremacy. I am not speaking of the Manchester school as such, but of the whole orthodox school of economists, which

never admits to its curriculum the study of conditions not purely economic. America, if she desires to occupy the place England is vacating, must take lessons of her mother, and profit by her mistakes.

The old school has been content to teach the laws that regulate the production, distribution, and exchange of wealth; and these laws have formed the whole of the science of political economy, so far as it can be called a science. It has studiously avoided all other matters, and, in the endeavors of its devotees to constitute it a science, has taken no cognizance of the conditions which, favorable or unfavorable, must attend the participators in the production, distribution, and exchange of commodities. It has been content to limit itself to things and their relations to individual and national wealth — more particularly the latter — rather than to include in its sphere of creed the vital relations of men. Even Mr. Mill, perhaps the most brilliant writer of the age upon the topic we are considering, informs us * that "political economy

* *Essays on Some Unpublished Questions*, 1844.

is concerned with man solely as a being who desires to possess wealth, and who is capable of judging of the comparative efficacy of means to that end. It makes entire abstraction of every other human passion or motive, except those which may be regarded as perpetually antagonizing principles to the desire of wealth; namely, aversion to labor, and desire of the present enjoyment of costly indulgences. . . . Political economy considers mankind as occupied solely in acquiring and consuming wealth." Professor John K. Ingram * calls this a vicious abstraction, which meets us on the very threshold of political economy; and Professor F. A. Walker,† commenting upon this saying of Mill's, remarks: "If Mr. Mill had merely meant that the political economist should begin by inquiring what such a monstrous race would do under the impulse of the antagonizing forces of greed and indolence, no one could have taken exception. But Mr. Mill did not mean this. He meant that the political

* *Penn Monthly*, November, 1879.

† In *Sunday Afternoon*, May, 1879.

economist should end here,— should literally make entire abstraction, once for all, of every other human passion or motive, and at no point in his reasoning should take account of any one of a score of recognizable and appreciable motives and feelings which enter to influence the actions of men in respect to wealth, love of country, love of home, love of friends, mutual sympathy among members of the same class; respect for labor, and interest in the laboring class on the part of the community at large; good will between landlord and tenant, between employer and employed; the power of custom and tradition; the force of inertia, ignorance, and superstition."

Mr. Mill's statements represent the tenets of the old school, although the founder of the science, Adam Smith, began his labors in it as a professor of moral philosophy, and taught it as a branch of that philosophy. His followers, in their ambition, have strayed far from the doctrines of their great master; and, with their departure from him, political economy has lost the sympathy and even the attention of the wage-workers of

English and American communities, the very support it largely needs and should have. But it would be unreasonable to expect them to have much reverence for what Carlyle has denominated "the dismal science," and George Howell "the grab-all science"; "for," says the latter, "its fundamental principles seem to be based on the Quaker's advice to his son, 'Make money honestly if you can, but make money.'" The majority of the followers of Smith have forgotten that Christianity says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; "Do unto others as ye would that men should do unto you"; "Love one another"; "Bear ye one another's burdens." On the other hand, they practically say, Love thyself; seek thine own advantage; promote thine own welfare; put money in thy purse: the welfare of others is not thy business.

It is because of this hard, unsympathetic nature of the so-called science of political economy that the labor question has come to be considered as distinct from it; and, because of the departure from sound ethical

features of the science by most of the leading writers, there has sprung up within a few years a new school, which bids fair to include on its roll of pupils the men in all civilized lands who seek by legitimate means, and without revolution, the amelioration of unfavorable industrial and social relations wherever found as the surest road to comparatively permanent material prosperity.

This school is neither large nor as yet powerful. Its first note came from Sismondi in 1818, and was echoed by an eminent Scotch divine, Dr. Thomas Chalmers, in 1832, who undertook, as part of his duty in a course of theological lectures to divinity students in the University of Edinburgh, to treat of political economy, which he defines as aiming "at the diffusion of sufficiency and comfort throughout the mass of the population by a multiplication or enlargement of the outward means and materials of human enjoyment." * He further declared that his object would be gained if he could demonstrate that even for the economic

* Introduction to Chalmers's *Political Economy*, 1832.

well-being of a people their moral and religious education was the first and greatest object of national policy, and that while this is neglected a government in its anxious and incessant labors for a well-conditioned state of the Commonwealth would only flounder from one delusive shift or expedient to another, under the double misfortune of being held responsible for the prosperity of the land, and yet finding that to be an element helplessly and hopelessly beyond its control. That the theory of wealth had to be examined in connection with the theory of population was a truth Dr. Chalmers recognized with the political economists; but he believed the great resulting lesson of such examination to be the intimate alliance which obtains between the economical and the moral, inasmuch as the very best objects of the science could not by any possibility be realized but by dint of prudence and virtue among the laboring masses.

Could this spirit have been breathed through all the wonderful volumes on po-

litical economy which have been written both sides of the Atlantic, there would have been fewer works periodically published upon the causes of depressions, and upon remedies for labor difficulties.

The creed of the new school is finding its way into the hearts and the minds of men; and it has for its advocates some of the best thinkers in Europe, with a few contemporaries in this country, who are questioning the logic of their old masters. I am proud to sit at the feet of these new teachers, and to declare my allegiance to such doctrines, which are the need of the world today so far as economic questions are concerned. They recognize as fundamental elements of political economy the humanity of the world and its moral condition, because the best humanity is to be found where the best morality prevails. They recognize that it is by the labor of the people employed in various branches of industry that all ranks of the community, in every condition of life, annually subsist; and that, by the produce of this labor alone, nations become powerful

in proportion to the extent of the surplus which can be spared for the exigencies of state; and that, by the increase or diminution of the produce of this labor, states, kingdoms, and empires flourish or decay.*

Had such principles formed a part only of the considerations of economists during the past seventy-five or one hundred years, there would not now be heard the lamentations concerning the decline or unpopularity of the science which occasionally come up from the old school, nor would the laboring masses be averse to consulting and profiting by the teachings of the masters of one of the most attractive departments of human knowledge. We have the testimony of Professor Bonamy Price of England that political economy is undergoing a crisis, and is passing through a revolution, both in the region of thought amongst its teachers and students, as well as in the great world, in the practical life of mankind. This revolution will result well for the happiness and

*Cf. Colquhoun, *Wealth, Power, and Resources of British Empire.*

welfare of our kind; for it will bring to their support, to their improvement, to their education, the best and most thoroughly digested thought of the first writers of the world. Of this thought they have long been robbed. This crisis will not take from political economy one jot or one tittle of the grand principles which make it, but will add to it those vitalizing elements which will make of it at once a science and a philosophy which will commend itself to the understanding of the very workers whose products serve to create the want of the science and the science itself. It will result in bringing into the science the treatment of the uses of wealth, as well as its accumulation, distribution, and exchange, and incite discussion upon the relations of labor and capital on an ethical basis; combining with the old question the old school always asks, "Will it pay?" another and higher query, "Is it right?"

Political economy has failed to see that the highest industrial prosperity of nations has attended those periods most given to

moral education and practices. History is full of lessons from which the new school will attempt to teach that the growth of a healthy, intelligent, and virtuous operative population is as much for the pecuniary interest of manufacturers themselves as for civilization; that the decline of the morals of the factory means the decline of the nation; and that the morals, the force, the higher welfare of the nation, depend upon the welfare of the working masses.

From these premises I predict that political economy will, in the near future, deal largely with the family, with wealth, with the state, as the three features of its doctrines, and not confine itself to wealth alone. Under family, it will take cognizance of the relations of the sexes, marriage and divorce, the position of woman, and the education and employment of children; the latter forming the most vital element in the economic considerations of the scientists, as well as inviting the ardent sympathies of the philanthropists. Under wealth, the old chapters will be revivified in the light of moral dis-

cernment, relative to all the delicate, but always reciprocal, relations of labor and capital. Under state, political ethics will be taught as a direct means of securing the highest material and social prosperity.

These considerations in the future will be demanded to answer the question constantly put, how labor may be rendered more generally attractive and remunerative, without impairing the efficiency of capital, so that all the workers of society may have their proper share in the distribution of profits. This I conceive to be the true labor question of to-day in the limited sense. Of course it is not that of the socialists, nor of many radical labor reformers who find themselves on the verge of socialism, but have not the courage to adopt its tenets; but it is the sober question of the sober, industrious, and thrifty workingmen, and the humane, large-hearted employers, of our country,— two types of men I prefer to speak to, hoping thereby to indirectly speak to the Shylocks of both orders; for, while the capitalists have their unprincipled Shylocks in one

capacity, the reformers have theirs in another.

The limited labor question, as I have announced it, seeks no panacea. It recognizes the faults of our civilization as those belonging to development, not to inauguration. "And that there is not any one abuse or injustice prevailing in society by merely abolishing which the human race would pass out of suffering into happiness." * It recognizes the fallacy of attempting to win advantages by isolated attacks at some special point, and that, like Christianity, civilization and its wonderful movements, it must attack all along the line, and hence make itself felt in all progressive steps and attempts to reach a higher and better life. It reaches beyond the hackneyed statements of the old school, that the interests of labor and capital are one, and incorporates them with another, that they are reciprocal; and while it freely admits that capital loans machinery and all the auxiliaries of production to the workingman, without which

* *Chapters on Socialism*, Mill.

advance he could not labor, except at ruinous processes, it wants capital to feel that it depends for its vitality upon the ability of labor to accept the loan; that capital invested in the machinery or the plant is dead matter until the operative vitalizes it with his presence; and it knows well, that, if either undertakes to do as it chooses, it either falls or is obliged to accept the most meagre results. It demands that each should consult the other if both are to be active and productive; and its advocates find that in all communities where reciprocal interests prevail, and a moral standard actuates both parties, the best prosperity is sustained. And, reaching farther than individuals and beyond industrial success, it claims that a broad catholicity in trade is essential to national success, and must take the place of the grasping principles of the old school, which have been sufficiently disastrous to both individuals and to nations. These demands, which seek to avoid adjustments by all and every revolutionary means suggested by enthusiasts, and which appear

upon the surface at every recurrence of industrial depression, are based upon ethical grounds, and yet in them lie the elements of economic progress.

From these statements it will be seen how thoroughly essential it is that political economy should deal with all the conditions of men,— their passions, crimes, appetites,— and should teach them how to make their passions subserve the highest interests of humanity, instead of abusing them and making them devilish.

Political economy, when it has been brought to the height of its grand mission, should, above all other considerations, point out the causes which have operated in leading people to good or evil, to prosperity or decline. Investigation is bringing these causes to light. When political economy and history shall have progressed in these directions sufficiently for general history to become philosophical, the first places will not be allotted, as now, in most of the works of our classic authors, to conquerors, haughty governors who enriched cities by

ruining countries, and to pretended heroes, who have been the seeming scourges of humanity; nor will the grand epochs of history be exclusively associated with such celebrities, but will be dedicated to those great men, the memory of whom has been too often neglected. I mean those who have loved peace, honored honest motives, strengthened rural life, favored good local government, given protection to smaller and struggling nations, and contributed without noise or ostentation to the development of public prosperity by the practice of the highest morality in commercial and political life.*

Corruption comes from two sources, the high and the low, but generally springs from the governing or superior classes. It sometimes derives its chief strength from persons connected with establishments for labor; and in this case the evil may have been propagated either by the proprietors or the workmen: but, no matter in what way it originates, it has really but one leading

* Cf. Le Play, *Organization of Labor*, pp. 66, 67.

cause,— the transgression of the moral law; and with such transgression there always comes industrial decline. The prosecution of this line of thought leads to the fullest indorsement of Le Play, when he says that "the best expression of the moral law is the Decalogue. . . . The people who show the most respect for these commandments are precisely those who enjoy, in the highest degree, competence, stability, and harmony. In carrying on the useful arts under the influences of these divine laws and precepts, the best organization of labor is everywhere effected,— that organization which, *par excellence*, may be called the customs of workshops." Dependence upon such precepts would carry the people of the world over periods of depression without an avalanche of solutions at every stage for depressions. Just at this time, when prosperity has opened all the factories in the land, and crowded all our wharves with produce, the danger is great; for moral decline is especially provoked by a kind of error, finding its support in the doctrine of uninterrupted

and absolute progress, signalizing the coming of an indefinite era of prosperity, for which the people are to depend upon blind destiny, without being called upon to merit it by devotion, personal sacrifice, or patriotism. This tendency, always a positive evil, is showing its influence at this time in suddenly inflated prices of commodities, a spirit of speculation, and a willingness to extend credits. The result can easily be foreseen in the light of the political economy of the labor question,— a few more years of remarkable prosperity, and then a period of depression, when everybody will be trying to discover the cause of the hard times, when, so far as history is reliable, the chief cause will be the same as it ever has been,— extended personal credits. Inflated commercial credits will always bring disaster.

The principles of ethico-political economy lie deeper down than the laws of rent, profits, supply and demand, cost of production, the wages-fund, and the like. The true matter is the essential constitution of human nature and the fundamental relations of man to natural

and moral forces. Out of these are drawn the ultimate justification of economic laws.* Without them, and with a too persistent adhesion to absolutely economic laws, the effect upon the industries of the world has been discouraging. Ethical wisdom alone can remedy such things. This suggests that the precepts of the Decalogue cannot be preserved by a people, except when each generation has the power, and the desire which gives the power, to teach them to the one which follows; and this can only be secured by strong moral elements united with the sacredness of the family. In the sacredness of the family is found the strength of a people. The desire to see a family growing up begets the industry and frugality which allows of its support; and any industrial condition which prevents the young men from becoming the heads of families is in direct opposition to the best economical prosperity of the race. Statistics prove conclusively three things,—1st, That marriages are decreasing in proportion to the increase of

* Cf. Henry A. James, *Communism in America*, p. 47.

population; 2d, That divorces increase; 3d, That illegitimate births increase. These incontrovertible facts are either the results of definite causes, or the causes of results not yet made clear; and I contend that, in either case, society, and certainly the labor question, has the right to demand their recognition in the science of political economy, as directly affecting the equitable distribution of the profits of production and the condition of all engaged in the work of production.

The direct and sure bearing of the influences springing from a condition of debt cannot be over-estimated so far as the evil effects upon industrial prosperity are concerned; and when a family, in order to bring to itself the ordinary necessaries of existence, is obliged to find a margin against it at the close of the year, we may be sure, whether the debt is the result of extravagance, or want of work, or want of proper remuneration, there is a lessening of moral tone and an increasing carelessness of obligations incurred, results which have an immediate and unmistakable bearing upon the

welfare of the community. Surely, as a matter of economics only, the grand science of Adam Smith should recognize these things.

The influence of stable family life upon industrial prosperity leads us very naturally to consider the position of woman in her relations to the productions of a state.

The loss of proper respect to women always precedes decline of any description, and especially marks the reign of immoral life. That delicacy of sentiment which, among Anglo-Saxons, shields women passing alone through public ways, relying upon the protection of all men, when wanting, is too often replaced by gross impropriety. This loss of respect has been, in the history of the world, the result either of disorganization in private family life, or in the place of labor: but, however it grows, it always lessens resistance to corruption,—in fact, blinds the mind to corruption; for it saps the authority of government to a greater degree than it does that of the father or the proprietor.

When woman is compelled by industrial

customs to cease to consider the highest consecration of her life to be to the duties of maternity, she ceases to be the minister of the domestic circle, the very foundation of material prosperity. Nor does this consecration prevent her highest intellectual development, — in fact, it demands it, and her political power and equality, too; but when her wages and the wages of her little ones become necessary for the support of the family, that it may be kept intact, the natural result, in due time, is that very loss of respect I have counted so disastrous.

I have reference only to principles involved; and these principles teach that the condition of inferiority into which people plunge when respect for woman is lost from any cause, whether from her work in a factory under modern conditions in England and America, or beside a mule in Belgium, or under a heavy burden in Italy, cannot be too much dwelt upon. The mischief it effects weighs upon society at large, and especially upon the wage-receivers, whom it renders too often incapable of satisfying

that legitimate desire which prompts them to seek promotion in social ranks. In fact, whenever honest love has lost its attraction, and the consent of the bride implies a financial recompense, young men make no efforts to provide for marriage by securing a home for a family, but establish themselves prematurely, and roam about all their lives among boarding-houses, depriving themselves of the moral and material advantages intimately associated with an indissoluble union of the family and the fireside.* Such a man does not, as a rule, hold himself bound to engage in any thing which tends prospectively to moral amelioration; and, having taken no pains to secure a home for a family, he has lost the very best opportunity of acquiring frugal habits. His family is compelled to give the preference to city factories, and, as a natural consequence of loss of respect, destitution and misery in time are sure to follow, especially when the combination with other manufactories, commercial crises, and

*Some of these thoughts on the family are taken in part from Le Play, *Organization of Labor*,— a work I commend to all students of social economy.

public and private reverses have led to a stoppage of labor. Under such circumstances the establishment of wages becomes an embarrassing subject. Difficulties increase, leading to irritating discussions; and the low moral tone of the operative, resulting from his first loss of respect for his wife, together with the grasping or impecunious state of his employer, brings about most unhappy conditions so often observed. Not that other causes do not enter into the case, but those I have stated are potent, and in themselves so forcibly affect the prosperity of communities, that they have their place in the philosophy of economics, where the political economist of the future will find them fully discussed. In the home lies the future welfare of our country. It is a hopeful sign that in general these conditions under modern industry, as will be seen in the next chapter, are far more favorable than of old.

The material prosperity of a community depends much upon the health of its workers, and the health of workers depends in

a very large degree upon sanitary surroundings. In order that the physical condition of the people may be improved by every means, social economy deals with the subjects of sewerage, tenement houses, light, and ventilation; and in this respect social science teaches valuable lessons to political science.

In this connection I cannot refrain from weaving in a few thoughts from W. R. Greg, an English writer, with some of my own. Dwelling upon the physical and moral development of the race as essential to prosperity, it may be asked, What may we not rationally hope for when the condition of the masses shall receive that concentrated and urgent attention which has hitherto been directed to furthering the interests of more favored ranks? what, when charity, which for centuries has been doing mischief, shall begin to do good? what, when the countless pulpits, that so far back as history can reach, have been preaching Catholicism or Anglicanism, Presbyterianism or Calvinism, or other isms, shall set to work to preach Christianity at

last? Do we ever even approach to a due estimate of the degree in which every stronghold of vice or folly overthrown, exposes, weakens, and undermines every other? of the extent to which every improvement, social, moral, or material, makes every other easier? of the countless ways in which physical reform reacts on intellectual and ethical progress and the prosperity of our industries? Under the constant teaching of a moral philosophy which shall embrace the political economy of the labor question, what a transformation — almost a transfiguration — will not spread over the condition of civilized communities, when, by a few generations, during which hygienic science and sense shall have been in the ascendant, the restored health of mankind shall have corrected the morbid exaggerations of our appetites; when, by insisting upon the healthy environment of our toiling masses, the more questionable instincts and passions, which, under such rule as I have indicated, shall have been less and less exercised and stimulated for centuries perhaps, shall

have faded into comparative quiescence, and have come under the control of the will; when, from the expulsion of vitiated air, disordered constitutions, whether diseased, criminal, or defective, which now spread and propagate so much mischief, and incur so much useless expense to taxpayers, shall have been largely eliminated; when sounder systems of educating the young shall have prevented the too early awakening of natural desires; when more rational, higher, and soberer notions of what is needful and desirable in social life, a wiser simplicity in living, and a more thorough conformity to moral law shall have rendered the legitimate gratification of our appetites more easy and beneficial, and when that which is needed for a happy home shall have become attainable by frugality, sobriety, and toil?

These conditions, so desirable to be reached, are not impossible ones, and are not to be reached by the revolutionary schemes of any party or sect, but by the gradual adoption of sanitary laws in the dwellings and homes of the people; and the new

school will teach that the secondary, and often the primary, causes and encouragements of intemperance are bad air and unwholesome food, which create a craving for drink; bad company, which tempts it; undue facilities, which conduce to it; squalid homes, which drive men forth for cheerfulness; and the want of other comfortable places of resort, which leaves no refuge but the publican's parlor or den. And if, on the other hand, we find that the consequences are poverty, squalid homes, brutality, crime, and the transmission and perpetuation of vitiated constitutions, who can say they cannot be prevented by the sound administration of sanitary laws, which shall prohibit the existence of bad air, of unventilated dwellings, the undue multiplication and constant accessibility of gin and beer shops, and the poisoning of wholesome food and drink? We cannot discuss the labor question from either the ethical or economic side without consideration of the temperance question; and from the results of such consideration it is perfectly clear to

my own mind that the solution of the temperance question is largely in the control of the employers of labor. The interests of capital as well as of labor, the interests of religion itself, demand a sober and industrious community; and, when the employers of labor generally shall demand abstinence from alcoholic drinks as a qualification for employment, the ugly problem, so far as the working masses are concerned, will be far on the way to settlement. What will bring the employers to the same issue is perhaps a knottier problem. The presence of crime works a direct injury upon the welfare of the workingman in many ways. It costs him more to live because of it; it disturbs his sense of justice because the convict works at the same occupation which furnishes his support: but, while the labor reformer cries for the abolition of convict labor, the political economy of the labor question cries for the reduction of the number of criminals by the prevention of crime as the surest and most permanent remedy for whatever evils may grow out of the

practice of employing convicts in productive labor. We make criminals now; for three-fourths of the crime committed is by young men who are temporarily led astray, and the fact that fifty per cent of all the convicts in the states prisons of the United States are under twenty-six years of age only confirms the estimate. These accidental criminals we make into positive convicts, to be fed upon the production of men outside. We shall learn better methods in the future civil state, in which wise and effective legislation, backed by adequate administration resulting from a sound public sentiment, shall have made all violation of law, all habitual crime, obviously, and inevitably, a losing game, and when the distribution of wealth, and its use, shall receive both from the statesman and the economist the same sedulous attention which is now concentrated exclusively upon its acquisition.*

The intelligent workingmen of this country do not object to wealth, but to its misuse. They know that luxury — I speak of

* Professor F. A. Walker.

enervating luxury — depopulates the country, and annihilates by degrees the class of husbandmen; for indolence and avidity tempt them to quit a laborious occupation for one which is more lucrative, though less certain. The ease in which the artifices of luxury live seduces the indigent peasantry, draws them to the manufacturing centres, and the country is deserted. Luxury corrupts the morals of men,— a truth no ethical writer will decline to adopt; but morals may subsist with wealth: it is luxury which vitiates. It occasions continual variations of taste and manners. The expense luxury requires inflames cupidity; money is run after, and purchased at any rate; and from the moment this mercenary greediness possesses the mass of the nation, as it did to considerable extent in 1873, virtue becomes ridiculous; honor, a chimera; and speculative credit takes the place of a sound basis for commercial transactions. Merit is then weighed by gold: dignities and employments and offices are valued only in proportion to the money they bring in. The rigor of law yields to the impulse

of luxury. In this condition a fatal calm exists as a sure corollary, which looks like prosperity, but which simply forbodes a violent storm.

The ethical view of the matter insists that luxury debases the soul and the mind, and therefore demands that political economy should teach the science of the use of wealth, as well as of its acquisition; and the best use of wealth can only follow the possession of high moral character by its owner.

The use of accumulation beyond the actual needs of industry involves, of course, the highest elements of character in both the parties to its growth: for the resources which render organized or individual labor most effective are on the side of capital, while the industry, patience, skill, and discipline which give life and action to the dead masses of capital, are on the side of labor; and, in any community where there is no combination of the two forces, both will waste away, and the nation decline and perish; and unless there be an intelligent settlement, upon high moral grounds, of the re-

spective claims of each force in the combination, ceaseless strife and conflicts will, by a longer and more miserable route, lead to the same catastrophe.* These propositions must be true if we recognize what labor truly is. John Ruskin has given the best definition: "Labor is the contest of the life of man with an opposite; the term 'life' including his intellect, soul, and physical power, contending with question, difficulty, trial, or material force. Labor is of a higher or lower order as it includes more or fewer of the elements of life; and labor of good quality, in any kind, includes always as much intellect and feeling as will fully and harmoniously regulate the physical force." † With this idea of labor, that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest influence, both personal and by means of his accumulative wealth, over the lives of others; and, again, that nation is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings.‡ All this may seem to be

* Anonymous. † *Unto This Last.* ‡ Cf. Ibid.

strange political economy; but it is of that nature which the future will demand as leading most directly to national and material prosperity. The new school will recognize all the good that comes from the doctrine of *laissez faire*, or the "let alone" theory of the old: but it will insist upon the liveliest activity on the part of capitalists to see to it that their employés are put upon the best possible footing as to all the material surroundings of life; that they have all the advantages to health, morals, and happiness, which come from sanitary regulations and practical education; and it will teach employers that a larger dividend can be drawn from the products of a community comparatively free from crime, intemperance, poverty, and vice of all kinds, than from one where these things are tolerated; and it will teach labor to demand of society the conditions I have described as the surest means of raising wages, shortening hours, and giving it the most attractive and remunerative employment.

Laissez faire can never be a substitute

for the higher principles of Christianity, and they always demand action. "Society, when at times it awakens, by periods of industrial distress, from dreams of a new golden age, to be realized by mechanical inventions, march of intellect, accumulation of capital, or by sound political economy, finds itself compelled by terrible necessity to abandon the system of *laissez faire*, and obliged to embark in a struggle for life, with the elements of disorganization and ruin."

The only effectual method of action is that in which each person begins by improving and reforming himself; that is, a revival of feelings of duty and moral obligation, whose decay is always the primary source of evil, leads to innumerable individual efforts, and to an improved state of public opinion, without which legislation can do but little. To be sure, we believe that Providence which rules the destinies of nations will bring about its appointed ends by its appointed means; but it is no less certain that each one of us, laborer or capitalist, has duties to perform, the responsibility of which

cannot be shifted to the shoulders of Fate,—another and older name for the system of *laissez faire*. The new school will demand that every one who, in his public or private capacity, can do anything to relieve misery, to combat evil, to assert right, to redress wrong, shall do it with his whole heart and soul.*

It will teach that government "should not connive at what is openly and notoriously immoral, even for revenue purposes; nor will it permit, by its sanction, a free trade in vice, with only the restriction that it shall be carried on wholesale instead of at retail."

The very best results to be gained depend almost entirely upon systems of industrial organization with law and morality dominant in society. Comte has told the world that "the state of every part of the social whole at any time is intimately connected with the contemporaneous state of all others. Religious belief, philosophy, science, the fine arts, commerce, navigation, government,—all are in close mutual dependence on one an-

* Cf. Laing's *Essays*.

other, insomuch that, when any considerable change takes place in one, we may know that a parallel change in all the others has preceded or will follow it."

Every accession to "man's empire over nature" may be, and probably is, productive of good to mankind at large; but we should never forget that any increase in the material forces at our disposal involves an increase of intellectual and moral energy. Such doctrine will inspire all classes with an endeavor to remedy the defects of the present edifice, rather than attempt a new construction upon its ruins. Such endeavors may meet with failure in one age, and be followed by success in another, as grand mechanical projects, instituted before their time, fail in the generation which saw their inception, yet become the admired achievements of the next. If the principle be true, let it be followed by employers and by men till the requisite higher notions of morality be planted firmly. We can then join the passionate vehemence of Carlyle in this utterance: "The leaders of industry, if industry is ever to be led, are

virtually the captains of the world. If there be no nobleness in them, there will never be an aristocracy more."

The political economy of the coming generation of writers will insist upon proper contracts respecting labor; and, while it will throw aside the idea of productive co-operation, it will be able to discover a system of contract which shall improve the whole condition of the employé so far as his relations to capital and the management of capital are concerned. In the recent past, social philosophy has become more and more cognizant of the distinctions between the exchange of commodities and the contract for services; and mildew will strike the political economy which denies the validity of the distinction. "Seventy-five years ago scarcely a single law existed in any country of Europe for regulating the contract for services in the interest of the laboring classes. At the same time the contract for commodities was everywhere subject to minute and incessant regulation. . . . Can there be wonder that statesmen and the mass of the people

entertain slight regard for political economy, whose professors refuse even to entertain consideration of the difference between services and commodities in exchange, and whose representatives in legislation have opposed almost every limitation upon the contract for labor as unnecessary and mischievous?" *

Political economy needs new life, a warmer blood, and a more thorough appreciation of the sinews of production; and, when this appreciation comes to it, or is forced upon it, the science will become a moral philosophy as well, and many of the dark places in the life of labor will be made bright and luminous with the light of prosperity.

The experience of England since the first years of the last century, when disorder in the sphere of labor showed itself by unmistakable signs, furnishes striking illustration of the absence of the principles I am contending for. Orthodox political economy portrayed all the advantages of the division of labor, the results of which are of the

* F. A. Walker, *Sunday Afternoon*, May, 1879.

greatest importance to mankind; but, like all great steps in advance, it carried certain evils with it, which could not have existed if carried on in accord with high moral considerations.

The great proprietors of England did not take into account the advantages the laborers once secured to themselves by combining domestic industries with their work in the manufactories. They, being exclusively preoccupied by the technical details of production, forgot the duties which good morals would have imposed, but which political economy failed to teach. The proprietors unscrupulously drew the workmen from all rural employments by offers of tempting wages; and, without giving them any guaranties of security, and without giving the new impetus a moral direction, they aggregated them in towns, and caused the evil of the excess of manufacturing labor from which the old country is suffering to-day far more acutely than has America at any period of her history.

The English people, stimulated by the

doctrines of a false political economy, placed too high an estimate upon the advantages to be derived from the accumulation of wealth, and at the same time gave themselves little inquietude in regard to the inconveniences and evils resulting from the sudden crowding of populations, subject to uneasiness, exposed to industrial instability, and impelled thereby to feelings of opposition irreconcilable with all social order. They did not perceive, nor did their economists teach, as they will in the future, that, by a continuance of evils resulting from the extension of a vicious system involving the inviolability of contracts between employer and employé, wealth must, sooner or later, cease to be a power, and the existence of the most solid industrial State history presents to us be compromised.* The seeming evils of this division of labor have been propagated both sides of the Atlantic by many writers, who, apparently ignorant of the truths history teaches as to the usages of prosperous places of labor, have persisted

* Cf. *Organization of Labor*, Le Play.

in a systematic distinction between economic order and moral order. They have paid no regard to the reciprocal duties imposed by moral order upon employers and upon workmen. For example, they have assimilated the social laws, fixing the wages of workmen to the economic laws which regulate the prices of goods and products; and by this erroneous teaching they have introduced a germ of disorganization into the sphere of labor, and led proprietors everywhere in too large a degree to hold themselves no longer bound by conscience to regard the salutary obligations imposed by moral order.*

Later writers will correct, and are correcting, these false doctrines, but slowly, however.

In Mr. Herbert Spencer's work, *The Data of Ethics*, we are informed that "ethics comprehends the laws of right living; and that, beyond the conduct commonly approved or reprobated as right or wrong, it includes all conduct which furthers or hin-

* *Organization of Labor*, Le Play.

ders, in direct or indirect ways, the welfare of self or others; that justice, which formulates the range of conduct, and limitations to conduct hence arising, is at once the most important division of ethics; that it has to define the equitable relations among individuals who limit one another's spheres of action by co-existing, and who achieve their ends by co-operation; and that, beyond justice between man and man, justice between each man and the aggregate of men has to be dealt with by it."

These are sound propositions, taken by themselves, no moral philosopher can for a moment reject, nor should they be rejected by economists; for a moment's reflection upon their bearing shows conclusively that material prosperity is best subserved by their incorporation as chapters in the laws of trade, commerce, and production.

Are the principles I have endeavored to apply as belonging to the relations of political economy to the labor question the outgrowth of mere theory, or are they born of actual experiences, and do

history and investigation teach their practicability?

History is bright with illustrations of the truth of the propositions laid down,— even history back of the century of mechanical progress. The story of feudal wrongs is relieved by the grand life of Saint Louis, who, in the thirteenth century, taught lessons of moral obligations which should exist between the lords and their followers the employers of to-day might well imitate.

Forcible illustrations of prosperity resulting from moral influence and a public virtue could be drawn from the times of Louis XIII. (1610–43), while the decline of material prosperity as the practical resultant of immorality and profligacy became marked under Louis XIV. and Louis XV. (1661 and after). Later periods give frequent proof of the positions taken; but I need not accumulate citations. I cannot, however, close without calling attention to the great progress which has taken place, and to some of the experiments which have been made in this direction. One of the most prominent

experiments in the Old World was carried out under the direction of Robert Owen at New Lanark before he became imbued with socialism. At the period of his Lanark experience (1819) Owen gained respect and renown in distant lands, was sought by the great, was consulted by governments, and counted among his patrons princes of the blood in England and more than one crowned head in Europe. The main cause of Owen's success began with the practical improvement of the working people under his superintendence as manager, and afterwards as owner, of the cotton-mills in New Lanark. He found himself surrounded by squalor and poverty, intemperance and crime, so common among the operatives of that day, and not quite unknown in our own. He determined to change the whole condition of affairs. He erected healthy dwellings with adjacent gardens, and let them at cost price to the people. He built stores where goods of proper quality might be purchased at wholesale prices, and thus removed the truck system. To avoid the

enormous waste of separate cooking, he provided dining-halls, where wholesome food might be obtained at reasonable prices. He established the first infant school in Great Britain. He excluded all under ten from the workshops, and made the physical and moral training of the young his special care. He adopted measures to put down drunkenness, and to encourage the savings of the people. The employés became attached to their employer, took a personal interest in the success of the business, labored ably and conscientiously, and so made the mills of New Lanark, in Scotland, a great financial success, as did our own Lowell those on the Merrimack a few years later. Mr. Griscom, an American traveller, visited Owen's mills in 1819, and concludes a report upon them as follows: "There is not, I apprehend, to be found in any part of the world a manufacturing village in which so much order, good government, tranquillity, and rational happiness prevail. It affords an eminent and instructive example of the good that may be effected by well-directed efforts to

promote the real comfort, and, I may add, the morality of the laboring classes."

"Thus one of these romantic valleys of the Clyde, which have been invested with the charm of poetry by Sir Walter Scott, had also been rendered the scene of 'an earthly paradise,' from a social point of view, by Robert Owen. Kings and emperors came to visit the model settlement, and returned with the conviction that the elevation of the masses depends on the ready earnestness and self-denying sympathy of those who try to improve them." *

Samuel Laing, an eminent traveller and social economist, writing in 1842 of the evils of the factory system of Great Britain, and quoting Chevalier, the French economist, who wrote from personal inspection, says: "Fortunately there is evidence to show that these are not necessary evils, and that, if a due regard be paid by those concerned to moral obligations, the factory system may be made to work well. The instance of the American factories at Lowell, in the State of

* Kaufmann.

Massachusetts, is decisive on this point." And, after describing the Lowell system, he asks, "Why is it not universal? Because," he answers, "certain *moral* elements of the American system are wanting in the English. . . . Instead of leaving things to shift for themselves, public opinion and a sense of duty have made the employers of labor [at Lowell] responsible for the moral superintendence of those belonging to their establishments." These conditions, he further remarks, "should make us pause before we set down the Americans as a nation of inveterate dollar-hunters. In no country have the claims of morality and humanity been so remorselessly sacrificed to the right of property as in England." * And he might have added, in no country has there been such blind following of a false notion which excludes moral considerations from the science of political economy.

The experience of the Briggs Brothers at their colliery in England, of the Cheney Brothers at South Manchester, Conn., of the

* Laing's *Notes of a Traveller*, pp. 81, 82.

Fairbanks Company in Vermont, of hundreds of others who have recognized the great fact of the Decalogue, testifies to the soundness of the doctrines which will be taught by the economists of the future. When they are taught, and political economy is reunited with moral philosophy (from which it was divorced while a bride), we shall find the heartiest support given to the science by the producers of society in whatever walk their lives may fall. Periods of depression, which formerly, in ages past, used to alternate with periods of prosperity on long sweeps, compassing a century, have gradually been reduced in the swing to shorter and shorter durations, so that now the oscillations are distinguished by half-decades of time. The growth of industrial ethics will continue to reduce the length of these periods, till we compass them within the year. This is one of the tangible steps in the progress of civilization; and no greater can be recorded, or one having more practical bearing upon the welfare and happiness of the people.

I have not been ambitious to promulgate these principles, or theories, with the idea they were to cure existing difficulties, or prevent the recurrence of past evils, but simply to make a new application to the wants of the future industrial world of those principles which alone have been successful under like circumstances in the past; and they are in accord with the Decalogue, the surest platform for the labor question — which involves capitalists and laborers — to rest upon, and by which to insure success.

III

THE FACTORY AS AN ELEMENT IN CIVILIZATION.

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A SUPERFICIAL study of the factory in almost any community leads to the conclusion that it has a deteriorating influence upon the operative as well as upon the population surrounding it, but this is only the superficial view. Managers of factories are perfectly familiar with the deeper, underlying ethical aspects of the question. Thirty years ago, before I began the investigation of social and economic conditions, I very naturally adopted the superficial view; but as my investigations proceeded, and as I studied the real relation of the factory to common, every-day life, I was obliged to change my attitude. It is only natural that this superficial view should obtain in the popular mind. Almost every writer, certainly with rare exceptions, adopts the view

that the factory has been beneficial in a purely economic sense. Few are ready to adopt the idea that the factory has been of itself and through its own influence an element in civilization or an element in lifting up the social life of any of the people.

The latter view results from a superficial study, as I have said, and also from an inverted vision. The glamour which surrounded the factory in the early days of its establishment in this country has led to very many erroneous conclusions. Some of us remember, and all of us have heard of, the Lowell factory girls, and the intellectual standard which they attained. Then, looking to the present textile factory operatives in different parts of the country, the comparison becomes very sharp and the conclusion apparently decisive. In making this comparison, however, the real conditions of the factory in the early days at Lowell, when the factory girls edited their own literary magazine, which achieved high rank everywhere, are not clearly recognized. The then existing prejudice of England against

the factory was well known here; and managers who built their factories in this country at that time were obliged, therefore, to offer attractive wages as well as attractive environment, and by such offers they drew into Eastern factories the daughters of the New England farmers and a high grade of English girls.

In speaking and writing of this period I have often called attention to my own recollections, and such recollections are just those which have led to false conclusions. My first teacher was a weaver in the factories at Lowell, Biddeford, and Salem. She was a writer on the Lowell *Offering*, the factory girls' publication, and a contemporary of Lucy Larcom and the other noble women who worked in the cotton-mills of those days.

A change came over the industrial condition, however, and the American and English girls were forced out of the factory through economic influences; but they were not forced downward in the scale of life. They were crowded out, but up into higher

callings. They became the wives of foremen and superintendents, teachers in the common schools, clerks in stores and counting-rooms; and they lost nothing whatever by their life and services in the factory. The lower grade of operatives that succeeded them brought the sharp comparison which led to the conclusion that the factory is degrading. The women who came in then were very largely Irish girls, fresh and raw immigrants, from the poorer and less developed localities of Ireland. Taking the places of the English and American girls in the Eastern factories, they soon began to improve their condition; and the result was that they in turn were crowded out by another nationality. But the Irish girl did not retrograde. She progressed, as had her predecessors, and enlisted in higher occupations. The daughters of the original Irish factory operatives and scrub-women who came to this country were no longer factory operatives and scrub-women. They were to be found standing behind the counters of our great retail shops, well dressed, educated

in our schools, bright, active, and industrious, and with a moral character equal to that of their predecessors.

The war period created the necessity of an increased number of factory operatives, and brought into our mills a great body of French-Canadian women. The opposition in the New England States to the presence of the French-Canadians was as great as it ever had been against the coming of the Irish. The opposition to the Irish had ceased: it was transferred to the French-Canadians; but I venture to say that there never has been a nationality coming into the United States that has shown such great progress in the same period of time as have the French-Canadians. They are now graduating from the factory, the Swedes, the Greeks, and others coming in; and the factory is performing the same civilizing operation for the new quotas that it has always performed for the others. It is reaching down and down to the lower strata of society, and lifting them up to a higher standard of living.

Now we are in the presence of another experiment, or experience, rather, which teaches the soundness of the view I am trying to convey, and that experience is in the South. When the American girls left the factories of New England, foreigners took their places. The establishment of the textile factory in the South led to the employment of a body of native people — those born and bred in the South, popularly known as the poor whites — who up to the time of the erection of cotton-factories had lived a precarious existence, and always in antagonism to the colored people, looking upon work as rather degrading than otherwise, because of the peculiar institution of the South, and on the whole not constituting a very desirable element in Southern population. To-day these people are furnishing the textile factories of the Southern States with a class of operatives not surpassed in any part of the country. This is the testimony of the late Mr. Dingley in a speech in the House of Representatives. It is the testimony of English manufacturers who

have carefully studied the conditions in the South; and the testimony from all sources is to the effect that the poor whites of the South are entering the cotton-mills as an opportunity which had never before been open to them. They are becoming industrious and saving in their habits; and, coming to the factory towns, they bring their families, and they in turn are brought into an environment entirely different from that under which they were reared. They are now able to educate their children,— to bring them up in a way which was never possible to them before; and thus the poor whites of the South are gradually, and with more or less rapidity, becoming not only a desirable, but a valuable, element in Southern population, on which the integrity and prosperity of a great industry largely depend.

The experience in the South is simply that of other localities, whether in this country or in England. The factory means education, enlightenment, and an intellectual development utterly impossible without it,— I mean to a class of people who could not reach

these things in any other way. It is an element in social life. By its educational influences it is constantly lifting the people from a lower to a higher grade.

When the textile factory was originally established in England, it took into its employment the children of agricultural districts,— paupers, charity boys and girls. Much was said about the degradation of the factory children. Parliamentary investigations and reports bewailed the conditions found, but it was forgotten in every instance that the factory really lifted these children out of a condition far worse than that in which the parliamentary committee found them when employed in the factories. We have had no such conditions to contend with in this country, but we have this superficial idea with which to contend. The notion that the factory creates ignorance, vice, and low tendencies is absolutely false. It does bring together a large body of comparatively ignorant persons. It congregates these persons into one community, and hence the results of ignorance and of lower

standards of life become clearly apparent because of the concentration. Before the concentration the ignorance existed precisely the same, but was diffused, and hence not apparent.

These contentions can be fully sustained by a brief historical discussion of the factory system of labor, in which the ethical elements of its inception and growth constitute an interesting study.

One of the most attractive departments of human knowledge is what may be denominated the evolution of industrial forces. The progress of the systems of labor gives to science a field for the practical application of the doctrines of evolution, entirely relieved from the abstract philosophical distinctions which, in greater or less degree, surround those doctrines when applied to growth in other departments.

The philosophy of history will take into account the vital elements of industrial forces in all their grand development as important factors in shaping civilization itself, as well as in shaping the commercial

policy of nations in their relations to each other.

It is to be regretted, however, that history, as it is generally constructed, takes but little account of such forces; and he who would understand the intimate connections of apparently diverse interests in their influence upon the establishment of industrial systems must do so upon the basis of his own studies, expecting and receiving but little aid from the historians.

The influences which led to the institution of the factory system are as diverse in their nature, almost, as the ramifications of the system itself. These influences, however, are not shrouded in any mystery, but are clearly defined; and their power, not only abstractly, but concretely, is fully recognizable in the origin of the system.

The factory system is of recent origin, and is entirely the creation of influences existing or coming into existence during the last half of the eighteenth century. These influences were both direct and subtle in their character, but all-important in their

place and in their combination. As a great fact, the system originated in no preconceived plan, nor did it spring from any spasmodic exercise of human wisdom. On the contrary, "it was formed and shaped by the irresistible force of circumstances, fortunately aided and guided by men who were able to profit by circumstances." * To borrow the expression of Cooke Taylor, . . . "Those who were called the fathers of the system were not such demons as they have sometimes been described, nor yet were they perfect angels. They were simply men of great intelligence, industry, and enterprise. They have bequeathed the system to this age, with the imperfections incident to every human institution; and the task of harmonizing their innovation with existing institutions, and with the true spirit of righteousness, belongs really to the great employers of labor rather than to the professed teachers of morality. It is too late to inquire whether the system ought or ought not to have been established; for established it is, and estab-

* Taylor's *Factory System*, pp. 1–11.

lished it will remain in spite of all the schemes of the socialists or the insane panaceas of quack economists." *

In its origin the factory system found its application in the textile trades of England; and we are very apt now, when the term is used, to confine it in our minds to the production of cotton and woollen goods, although it has in reality embraced nearly all lines of the products of machinery.

A factory is an establishment where several workmen are collected together for the purpose of obtaining greater and cheaper conveniences for labor than they could procure individually at their homes, for producing results by their combined efforts which they could not accomplish separately, and for saving the loss of time which the carrying of an article from place to place during the several processes necessary to complete its manufacture would occasion.

The principle of a factory is that each laborer, working separately, is controlled by some associating principle which directs his

* Cf. Taylor's Dedication to *Factory System.*

producing powers to effect a common result, which it is the object of all collectively to attain.

Factories are, therefore, the legitimate outgrowth of the universal tendency to association which is inherent in our nature, and by the development of which every advance in human improvement and human happiness has been gained.

The first force which tended to create this system was that of invention, and the stimulus to this grew out of the difficulty the weavers experienced in obtaining a sufficient supply of yarn to keep their looms in operation.

Invention, paradoxical as it may seem, had really aggravated the difficulty by a device for facilitating the process of weaving. I have reference to the fly shuttle, invented in 1738 by John Kay. By this device one man alone was enabled to weave the widest cloth, while prior to Kay's invention two persons were required.

One can readily see how this increased the difficulty of obtaining a supply of yarn; for

the one-thread wheel, though turning from morning till night in thousands of cottages, could not keep pace either with the weaver's shuttle or with the demand of the merchant.*

In 1738 the very first gleams of the genius which was to remove the difficulties were discovered, and wings were given to a manufacture which had been creeping on the earth. An elementary mechanical contrivance was invented whereby a single pair of hands could spin twenty, a hundred, or even one thousand threads. I need not discuss the details of the various inventions which culminated in a grand constellation of mechanical devices as perfect and as wonderful as any class of inventions, and which have influenced the world in a deeper sense than any other save printing.

It is true that, when this admirable series of machines was made known, and by their means yarns were produced far superior in quality to any before spun in England, as well as lower in price, a mighty impulse was given to the cotton manufacture.

* Baines's *History of the Cotton Manufacture*, p. 117.

It was an impulse, however; and the inventions would not have brought their fullest fruition without the powerful influences which came into existence through events which have not usually been considered in this connection, but which are as legitimate in considering what I have called the evolution of industrial forces as the inventions themselves, which simply constitute the initiatory outgrowth of such evolution.

While the processes of production had become in England more efficient through the invention of spinning-machines, whereby the weavers were kept busy and allowed no rest, it was only where a stream gave force to turn a mill-wheel that the spinner or the wool-worker could establish his factory; while, if this difficulty even had not existed, the inefficiency of distribution would have rendered useless, to a large degree, a greatly augmented production.

Mr. Green, in his *History of the English People,* speaking of the decade beginning with 1760, remarks: "The older main roads, which had lasted fairly through the Middle

Ages, had broken down in later times before the growth of traffic and the increase of wagons and carriages. The new lines of trade lay often along mere country lanes which had never been more than horse-tracks, and to drive heavy trains through lanes like these was all but impossible. Much of the woollen trade, therefore, had to be carried on by means of long trains of pack-horses. . . . In the case of yet heavier goods, such as coal, distribution was almost impracticable, save along the greater rivers or in districts accessible from the sea." But, at the time when Hargreaves and Arkwright were struggling to make their inventions available, the enterprise of a duke and the ingenuity of a millwright not only solved the problem of distribution, which the trade of the country was forcing upon England, and which improved cotton machinery was sure to complicate, but they paved the way, by constructing canals, for the greatest application of the steam-engine, which could not have played its part in establishing the factory system without means of distributing

coal; and the system itself, without the steam engine, would have been a feeble institution.*

England at once seized on the discovery of the canal as the means by which to free herself from the bondage in which she had been held. "From the year 1767 a network of water-roads was flung over the country; and, before the movement had spent its force, Great Britain alone was traversed in every direction by three thousand miles of navigable canals."

The free and cheap distribution of coal and iron at once became an important factor,— in fact, the chief material element in the development of the factory system; and now for the first time in the history of civilization a new motive power became indispensable to growth. For "what was needed to turn England into a manufacturing country was some means of transforming the force" of the sun "stored up in coal into a labor force; and it was this transformation which was brought about through the agency of steam." †

* Green, vol. i. p. 279. † Green.

The location of mills upon streams of water was no longer a physical necessity. They could be built and run near large towns, where they could be fed from the crowded population. The influence of this change of location has been the cause of most of the so-called factory evils.

The power-loom closed the catalogue of machines essential for the inauguration of the era of mechanical supremacy. What inventions will come during the continuance of that era cannot be predicted, for we are still at the beginning of the age of invention. The wonderful results of its first twenty years of life are sufficient to indicate something of the future.

When the period of which I have spoken, the score of years from 1765 to 1785, had closed, England found herself possessed of powers which needed only the support of the silent forces of the nation to carry her to the very highest point in industrial supremacy.

Inventions were the material forces, powerful, indeed, as agents in building the fac-

tory system. What were the spiritual forces, so to speak? The inner, subtle, but also powerful agencies at work to render the material forces successful? A body without a spirit is but dead matter. This is certainly true, in one sense, of all the mechanical bodies which have served as expressions of mind. A machine is really embodied action. A grand combination of inventions must embody not only all the actions represented, but the spirit of the age; for without this they are powerless.

While the inventions of which I have spoken were being perfected, Adam Smith was working out his memorable *Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations.* When he was lecturing with applause, in Glasgow, from the chair of Moral Philosophy, James Watt was selling mathematical instruments in an obscure shop within the precincts of the same university, and was working out his inquiry into the practicable methods of applying steam.

It may seem as if no two departments of human thought were more widely separated

than those in which these two men were engaged. One was a region purely mental, the other purely physical. The one had reference to the laws of mind, the other to the laws of matter; and yet the work of Adam Smith and that of James Watt were inseparably connected, not only as involving analogous methods of investigation, but as showing in their result the blending and co-operation of mental and material laws.*

Dr. Smith treated of the philosophy of trade, and by his philosophy prepared the English mind to receive for England's benefit the commercial results not only of her inventions, but of her losses from the war with her colonies, and the diversion of her slave-trade capital.

Adam Smith published his work in 1776, and during the seven years of strife with this country his doctrines had taken silent and almost unobserved possession of the minds of the thinking men of England; so that at the close of the war it was not difficult to turn the thoughts of manufacturers

* Duke of Argyle, *Reign of Law*, p. 339.

and merchants to the industrial possibilities of Great Britain.

Guizot remarked that "England's liberties are owing to her having been conquered by the Normans." The truth of this statement is easily discernible under the light of the philosophy of history. It is also true, to a great extent, that England owes her industrial supremacy to the loss of her American colonies.

With the close of the war, the industry of England was exerted to its fullest power in the task of supplying the world with cotton goods. She flooded America with cheap goods, and demoralized our merchants and our people, and actually drove them into a fever for foreign goods. The capital of England, released by the war, was free to engage in industrial and commercial enterprises; and well did the business brains of the country apply the doctrines of the Glasgow economist. But a stranger power than war, or the pauperism of agricultural districts, from which the factories were largely supplied with cheap labor, was added to the

combination of forces essential to the establisment of a new industrial order. Disgraceful and tedious as had been the contest with the colonies, the years devoted to it were years of as grand and mighty a revolution for the mother as for the child.* This revolution took the shape of a great moral and religious power, which seemed to roll without obstacle over the land, changing the politics of the country and changing the directions of the employment of active capital.

The religious revival work of the Wesleys brought a nobler result than mere religious enthusiasm. A philanthropic impulse grew out of the Wesleyan impulse. The writings and the personal example of Hannah More drew the sympathy of England to the poverty and crime of the agricultural laborer. A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and the oppressed grew with amazing strength, and under its influence Clarkson and Wilberforce were sustained in their crusade against the iniquity

* Green.

of the slave trade. This grand enthusiasm carried Howard through the moral chivalry of his labors; so each and all who sought the elevation of the oppressed thus gave a shot at the slave trade either directly or indirectly, for all helped to create the public sentiment which insisted upon its abolition. "Half the wealth of Liverpool was drawn from the traffic of its merchants in human flesh." *

As the spirit of humanity told upon the people, apathy suddenly disappeared. Philanthropy allied itself with the Wesleyan movement in an attack on the slave trade. The first assaults were repulsed by the opposition of the merchants, who argued that the abolition of the trade meant their ruin. But the movement gathered strength from year to year, and the traffic was suppressed; and the vast amount of capital employed in it was forced into new channels, and naturally into commercial and industrial enterprises.

The philosophy of these events in their relation to the establishment of the factory

* Green.

system cannot be denied. To be sure, invention alone would in time have succeeded in instituting the new system, but not for generations upon an enduring basis.

It required all the forces I have considered — physical, mental, philosophical, commercial, and philanthropical, working in separate yet convergent lines — to lay the foundation of an entirely new system of industry; and these forces coming into existence during the twenty years following the success of the efforts of Hargreaves and Arkwright, and extending in their wonderful influences over the earth wherever civilization has a foothold, constitutes that period one of the most remarkable since the Christian era. In fact, no generation since then has so completely stamped itself upon the affairs of the world.

England at the close of the Revolution held, as she supposed, the key to the industrial world in cotton manufactures. Certainly, she held the machinery without which such manufactures could not be carried on in competition with her own mills.

The planting of the mechanic arts in this country became a necessity during the war of the Revolution; and afterwards the spirit of American enterprise demanded that New England, at least, with her barren soil, should improve the privileges she did possess, which were water-power and skill.

Of course, most industries whose products were called for by the necessities of the war were greatly stimulated; but with peace came reaction, and the flooding of our markets with foreign goods. A new patriotism, which sought industrial as well as political independence of the mother country, resulted in the new constitution, the second act under which was passed July 4, 1789, with this preamble: "Whereas it is necessary for the support of the government, for the discharge of the debts of the United States, *and for the encouragement and the protection of manufactures* that duties be laid on goods, wares, and merchandises imported, be it enacted," etc.

Patriotism and statute law thus paved the way for the importation of the factory sys-

tem of labor, and so its institution here as well as in England was the result of both moral and economic forces. These forces, existing at the time of the coming of Samuel Slater, the father of American manufactures, as President Jackson designated him, made Slater's work a success; and his success firmly established the factory system in this country. Slater came in 1789, equipped with the knowledge of the manufacture of cotton-machinery gained as an apprentice to Arkwright himself. He constructed the machinery for a small mill in Rhode Island in 1790, from which period the progress in the establishment of factory manufactures was uninterrupted save by temporary causes.

From the textile industries the system has extended to almost all branches of production, till a large proportion of all manufactured articles in use to-day in civilized countries are factory-made; and yet one-half the population of the globe is still clothed with hand-made fabrics.

The statistics of the industries of Great Britain and the United States are the sta-

tistics of industries conducted under the system.

In France, Germany, and Belgium the system predominates, although the domestic system of labor in these countries has continued to exist to considerable extent.

The new system, which has found its most rapid extension in the United States, has enabled the manufacturers of this country, with our wonderful stores of raw materials at hand, to become the successful rivals in the mechanic arts of any country that desires to compete with them.

It has changed the conditions of masses of people. It has become an active element in the processes of civilization, and has changed the character of legislation and of national policy everywhere.

Is this great, powerful, and growing system a power for good or for evil? Does it mean the elevation of the race or its retrogression?

When we speak of civilization, we have in mind the progress of society toward a more perfect state, as indicated by the growth of

a long period of time. We do not simply contemplate specific reforms or especial evils, but the trend of all social influences.

When we speak of the factory system, we are apt to let our thoughts dwell upon the evils that we know or imagine belong to it. This is certainly true when civilization and the factory system are suggested in the same sentence. This is wrong, for we should contemplate the factory system in its general influence upon society, and especially upon that portion of society most intimately connected with the factory.

My position is that the system has been and is a most potent element in promoting civilization. I assume, of course,— and the assumption is in entire harmony with my thoughts,— that the civilization of the twentieth century will be better than that of the eighteenth and nineteenth.

We hear a great deal about the sweating system, and the popular idea is that the sweating system is the product of modern industrial conditions. The fact is that it is a remnant of the old industrial system. It

is the old hand system prior to the establishment of the factory, and has been projected into our time. Once universal, the sweating system is now limited to one or two industries, and is gradually being eliminated through the very system which is sometimes condemned. Just as fast as the sweat-shops are developed into the factory, and brought under the laws which relate to factory regulation, just so rapidly is the sweating system being eliminated. The only cure is to make of the sweat-shop the factory. The social life of sweaters can be improved only by lifting them to the grade of factory operatives. An examination into the conditions existing under the factory system, and those of the domestic or individual system which preceded it, fully sustains this position.

None of the systems of labor which existed prior to the present, or factory system, was particularly conducive to a higher civilization. Wages have been paid for services rendered since the wants of men induced one to serve another, yet the wage system is of recent origin as a system. It

arose out of the feudal system of labor, and was the first fruits of the efforts of men to free themselves from villeinage. The origin of the wage system cannot be given a birthday as can the factory system. It is true, however, that the wage system rendered the factory system possible, and they have since grown together. The first may give way to some other method for dividing the profits of production; but the factory system, perfected, must, whether under socialistic or whatever political system, remain until disintegration is the rule in society.

The feudal and slave systems had nothing in them, so far as any progressive elements were concerned, from which society could draw the forces necessary to growth. On the contrary, while modern civilization owes much to the feudal system, and slavery was in its origin a great step in civilization, these systems reflected the most depressing influences, and were in great measure the allies of retrogression.

The domestic system, which claims the eighteenth century almost entirely, was woven

into the two systems which existed before and came after it. In fact, it has not yet disappeared.

It is simple fact, however, when we say that the factory system set aside the domestic system of industry. It is idyllic sentiment when we say that the domestic system surpassed the former, and nothing but sentiment.

There is something poetic in the idea of the weaver of old England, before the spinning machinery was invented, working at his loom in his cottage, with his family about him, some carding, others spinning the wool or the cotton for the weaver; and writers and speakers are constantly bewailing the departure of such scenes.

I am well aware that I speak against popular impression, and largely against popular sentiment, when I assert that the factory system in every respect is vastly superior as an element in civilization to the domestic system which preceded it; that the social and moral influences of the present outshine the social and moral influences of the old. The hue

and cry against the prevailing system has not been entirely genuine on either side of the Atlantic. Abuses have existed, great and abominable enough, but not equal to those which have existed in the imagination of men who would have us believe that virtue is something of the past.

The usual mistake is to consider the factory system as the creator of evils, and not only evils, but of evil-disposed persons. This can hardly be shown to be true, although it is that the system may congregate evils or evil-disposed persons, and thus give the appearance of creating that which already existed.

It is difficult, I know, to establish close comparisons of the conditions under the two systems, because they are not often found to be contemporaneous; yet sufficient evidence will be adduced, I think, from a consideration of the features of the two, and which I am able to present, to establish the truth of my assertions.

Do not construe what I say against the domestic system of industry as in the least

antagonistic to the family, for I am one of those who believe that its integrity is the integrity of the nation; that the sacredness of its compacts is the sacredness and the preservation and the extension of the race; that the inviolability of its purity and its peace is the most emphatic source of anxiety of law-makers; and that any tendency, whether societary or political, toward its decay or even toward its disrespect deserves the immediate condemnation and active opposition of all citizens as the leading cause of irreligion and of national disintegration.

It should not be forgotten that "the term factory system, in technology, designates the combined operation of many orders of work-people . . . in tending with assiduous skill a series of productive machines continually propelled by a central power. This definition includes such organizations as cotton-mills, flax-mills, silk and woollen mills, and many other works; but it excludes those in which the mechanisms do not form a connected series, nor are dependent on one

prime mover." It involves in its strictest sense "the idea of a vast automatum, composed of various mechanical and intellectual organs, acting in uninterrupted concert for the production of a common object, all of them being subordinated to a self-regulated moving force." *

So a factory becomes a scientific structure, its parts harmonious, the calculations requisite for their harmony involving the highest mathematical skill; and in the factory the operative is always the master of the machine, and never the machine the master of the operative.

Under the domestic system of industry grew up that great pauper class in England, which was a disgrace to civilization. It was fed by the agricultural districts more than by those devoted to manufactures. It continued to grow until one-fourth of the annual budget was for the support of paupers. The evil became fixed upon the social life as one of its permanent phases. Legislation, philanthropy, charity, were utterly

* Dr. Ure, *Philosophy of Manufactures*, p. 13.

powerless in checking it; and it was not checked till the inventions in cotton manufactures came, since which events it has been on the decline, taking the decades together. The factory absorbed many who had been under public support. On the other hand, it drew from the peasantry by the allurements of better wages, and without any guaranties as to permanency or care as to moral responsibility; yet on the whole the state was benefited more than any class was injured.

The domestic laborer's home, instead of being the poetic one, was far from the character poetry has given it. Huddled together in what poetry calls a cottage, and history a hut, the weaver's family lived and worked, without comfort, conveniences, good food, good air, and without much intelligence. Drunkenness and theft of materials made each home the scene of crime and want and disorder. Superstition ruled and envy swayed the workers. If the members of a family endowed with more virtue and intelligence than the common herd tried to so conduct themselves as to secure at least self-respect,

they were either abused or ostracized by their neighbors. The ignorance under the old system added to the squalor of the homes under it, and what all these elements failed to produce in making the hut an actual den was faithfully performed, in too many instances, by the swine of the family.

The home of the agricultural laborer was not much better; in fact, in Great Britain and France he has been exceedingly successful in maintaining his ignorance and his degraded condition.

Sentiment has done much, as I have said, to create false impressions as to the two systems of labor. Goldsmith's Auburn and Crabbe's Village hardly reflect the truest picture of their country's home life.

The reports of the Poor Laws Commissioners of England are truer exponents of conditions, and show whether the town was during the first fifty years of the new system staining the country or the country the town. "From the documents published by these commissioners it appears that, but for the renovating influence of her manufac-

tures, England would have been overrun with the most ignorant and depraved of men to be met with where civilization has made much progress. It has been in the factory districts alone that the demoralizing agency of pauperism has been most effectually resisted, and a noble spirit of industry, enterprise, and intelligence called forth." * Agriculturists gave children and youth no more than half the wages paid them in factories, while they filled the workhouses with the unemployed. Under the operation of the miserable poor laws, which the domestic system fathered, the peasantry were penned up in close parishes, where they increased beyond the demand for their labor, and where the children were allowed to grow up in laziness and ignorance, which unfitted them from ever becoming industrious men and women.

But in the chief manufacturing districts, while the condition of the factory children became the subject of legislation for protection, their condition was one to be envied

* Ure, p. 354.

beside that of the children in mining and agricultural districts.

The spasmodic nature of work under the domestic system caused much disturbance, for hand working is always more or less discontinuous from the caprice of the operative, while much time must be lost in gathering and returning materials. For these and obvious reasons a hand weaver could very seldom turn off in a week much more than one-half what his loom could produce if kept continuously in action during the working hours of the day, at the rate which the weaver in his working paroxysms impelled it.*

The regular order maintained in the factory cures this evil of the old system, and enables the operative to know with reasonable certainty the wages he is to receive at the next pay day. His life and habits become more orderly; and he finds, too, that, as he has left the closeness of his home shop for the usually clean and well-lighted factory, he imbibes more freely of the health-giving

* Ure, p. 333.

tonic of the atmosphere. It is commonly supposed that cotton-factories are crowded with operatives. From the nature of things, the spinning and weaving rooms cannot be crowded. The spinning-mules, in their advancing and retreating locomotion, must have five or six times the space to work in that the actual bulk of the mechanism requires; and, where the machinery stands, the operative cannot. In the weaving-rooms there can be no crowding of persons. During the agitation for factory legislation in the early part of the last century it was remarked before a committee of the House of Commons "that no part of a cotton-mill is one-tenth part as crowded, or the air in it one-tenth part as impure, as the House of Commons with a moderate attendance of members." * This is true to-day. The poorest factory in this country is as good a place to breathe in as Representatives Hall during sessions, or the ordinary school-room. In this respect the new system of labor far surpasses the old.

* Ure, p. 402.

Bad air is one of the surest influences to intemperance, and it is clearly susceptible of proof that intemperance does not exist and has not existed to such alarming degrees under the new as under the old system. Certainly, the influence of bad air has not been as potent.

The regularity required in mills is such as to render persons who are in the habit of getting intoxicated unfit to be employed there, and many manufacturers object to employing persons guilty of the vice. Yet, notwithstanding all the efforts which have been made to stop the habit, the beer-drinking operatives of factory towns still constitute a most serious drawback to the success of industrial enterprises; but its effects are not so ruinous under the new as under the old system.

At Amiens, France, the two systems were in existence, side by side and in full force, in 1860, and are now to considerable extent. From the investigations of Reybaud, it is shown that the domestic system exists in the country around Amiens, while the factory

system prevails in the city itself. The country workers have had a very bad reputation. The evil of intemperance is inveterate.

"The people living under the old system resisted improvement. They wished to live and die in the houses of their parents, and expressed no desire to leave them." The great mass of these workers were at home, even at a date as late as 1860, under a roof that was never abandoned. The investigation just referred to proves that the homes of the factory workers were incontestably better than those of the home workers, for they were free from the incumbrances and clogging influences which existed when the means and materials for manufacture disputed with the necessities of housekeeping for a great part of the room. This difference in the houses under the two systems is also the result of circumstances easily explained. The factory workers as a rule earn more than the home workers. By having fixed and regular hours, they are kept from falling into habits of idleness. They know

to a centime what they will have at the end of the week. Their dependence is their security. Their wages have the merit of steadiness. The condition of the home workers is precarious. Weeks and months pass at times, and they out of work. Financial crises, derangements of commerce, change in fashion,— all these affect them far more seriously than they do the factory people. To-morrow is never sure with the workers under the domestic system, and privation in the future is always staring them in the face. All these bad conditions are aggravated by the serious intemperance of the home workers about Amiens.

There are no heads of establishments to influence these men. They occupy an independent and really an isolated position. Under the factory system in France, intemperance is often dealt with effectually, and the first honor belongs to the heads of the establishments. By concerted action, which should be taken for example, they closed their doors against those addicted to intemperance, and where drunkenness marked

them as the ones to be excluded. Efforts were made to secure pledges, and with success. To-day drunkenness is not an obstacle to the success of manufacturing establishments either in this country or in England.

In this country the proprietors of factories have taken a position in regard to intemperance, in many instances, which reflects the highest honor upon them. Many years ago at York Mills, in Maine, Mr. Samuel Batchelder, the agent, issued regulations prohibiting the use of intoxicants by the operatives. When his example is followed generally, we shall have less of the beer-shop in factory towns.

The statistics of crime usually offer evidence of the tendencies of different classes in a community. In studying these statistics for large manufacturing centres in Great Britain, I have found that neither the criminal ranks nor the ranks of prostitution are filled up from the factories. Much has been said about Manchester, England, and its "hoodlum" class cited as the operative pop-

ulation. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is the miserable hovel tenantry outside the factory workers which makes Manchester's criminal list so large.

The common mistake writers have made is in taking a place like Manchester by which to judge the factory system. Manchester is not purely a factory town. Visitors make the double blunder of believing that all its working classes belong to the factory population, and that all the misconduct they witness or hear about among females of the lower rank must be ascribed to the factory system. The testimony from a return from the penitentiary of Manchester "proves how far the ranks of prostitution are recruited from factory girls in proportion to other classes." This report stated that only eight out of fifty proceeded from factories, while twenty-nine out of fifty were from domestic service.* I could quote many statistics upon kindred points. It is sufficient to know that the attempts made to support charges of the abundance of crime

*Taylor, p. 45.

and prostitution in operative towns in England by statistical tables have all been based on the supposition that the great town nuisances are identical or connected with the factory system. My own inquiries and examination of criminal records disprove the common assumption.

I have no doubt that immorality exists among factory operatives the same as it exists on Fifth Avenue and everywhere else on earth where men and women are found, but I do not believe that it exists in any greater proportion in the factory than in any other walk of life. On the other hand, I believe that immoral lives are less frequent among the factory population than among any other class in the community; and investigations, and extensive ones at that, in this country and abroad teach the truth of this assertion.

Some years ago it was my good fortune to look over some of the great thread works in Paisley, Scotland; and this very question of immorality was discussed with the foreman of one of the works. One gentleman,

who had been connected with the Coates factories for forty years, informed me that during that period he had known but one girl who had departed from a strictly honest life; and she, as soon as her habits were known, was ostracised by the coldness of her associates. This I found to be true in almost every factory I have ever visited. As soon as a girl loses her character, her mates frown upon her, and she is fairly driven from the field. Women in cotton-mills and in all other factories are as careful of their characters as is any other class. The charge that the factory breeds immorality among women is not true, and cannot be sustained by any facts that have ever been collected. This one condition constitutes the factory an important element in social life; for the women who are there, and are working for low wages,— lower than any of us would like to have paid, but which are governed according to economic conditions and law,— are working honestly and faithfully, and living honest and virtuous lives. It must be so. Women cannot work eight or ten or twelve or more

hours in a cotton-factory, and live a dissolute life the rest of the day.

What has been said is equally true of France. In one locality, out of a criminal list of 4,992, but 216 were workers in the textile factories.*

It is a fact that the factories in France are increasing in number, and consequently operatives are drawn into them. Now in this process of change from the old to the new industrial system, which has been watched by careful investigators, the direct results are easily seen. If the factories have a bad influence on morals, crime should remain in proportion as the number of factory workers increased. The contrary, however, is the case; for in the locality already alluded to the criminal list in 1855 was 2,214, while in 1859 it had, by steady reduction, fallen to 1,654, and in a constantly increasing factory population.

These facts are representative, not isolated, in their nature; and they prove conclusively the falsity of prevailing impressions. They

* Reybaud, *Cotton*, p. 108.

are witnesses that the newer system, by securing more competency, fights bad instincts with the very best of weapons,— the interest of those it employs.

In great towns the factories have had to contend with all the nuisances which a rapid increase of population beyond the due limits of accommodation must necessarily produce. The only places where the factory system can be fairly tested on its own merits are the small towns in which the factory makes the place. Oldham, England, is the true type, not Manchester.

Mr. N. W. Senior has given abundant evidence of the truth of these positions.

There is another supposition relative to the factory to which I wish to call attention, and which relates emphatically to the topic of this paper. It is that the factory has a dwarfing influence upon skill: that skill is degraded to common labor. This supposition also arises from a superficial examination of modern establishments, wherein a cheap and often ignorant body of laborers is employed, the appearance being that skilled

and intelligent workmen are replaced by unskilled and unintelligent workmen, and the conclusion being that the modern system forces the skilled and intelligent workman downward in the scale of civilization. This is not the true sociological conclusion, which is that the modern system of industry gives the skilled and intelligent workman an opportunity to rise in the scale of employment, in intellectual development, in educational acquirements, in the grade of services rendered, and hence his social standing in his community, while at the same time it enables what was an unskilled and unintelligent body of workers to be employed in such ways and under such conditions and surrounded by such stimulating influences that they in turn become intelligent and skilled, and crowd upward into the positions formerly occupied by their predecessors, thus enabling them to secure the social standard which they desire. This conclusion, it seems to me, is the true one, and makes the discussion of the question whether the modern system of industry, the factory, really has

a stimulating effect upon the intellectual growth of the people not only an interesting, but a peculiarly appropriate, one at all times.*

What is the truth as to wages? The vast influence of wages upon social life need not be considered here, but the question whether the factory system has increased them may be. I am constantly obliged, in my everyday labors, to refute the assertion that wages under the factory system are growing lower and lower. The reverse is the truth, which

* "As to the abasement of intelligence which is said to follow in proportion as tasks are subdivided, it is a conjecture more than a truth shown by experience. This abasement is presumed, not proven. It would be necessary to prove, for example, that the hand weaver, who throws the shuttle and gives motion to the loom, is of a superior class to the machine weaver who assists, without co-operating, in this double movement. Those who really know the facts would have just the opposite opinion. Employing the muscles in several operations instead of one has nothing in it to elevate the faculties," and this is all the opponents of machinery claim. In their view, the most imperfect machines, those which require the most effort, are the ones which sharpen the intellectual faculties to the greatest degree. We can easily see where this argument would carry us if pushed to the end.

"There is nothing in the working of machinery which, compared with the old methods, resembles an abasement of labor. The easing of the arm does not lead to an enfeeblement of the mind." Cf. Reybaud.

is easily demonstrated. The progress of improvement in machinery may have reduced the price paid for a single article, yard, or pound of product, or for the services of a skilled and intelligent operative; but the same improvement has enabled the workman to produce in a greater proportion and always with a less expenditure of muscular labor and in less time, and it has enabled a low grade of labor to increase its earnings. At the same time, a greater number have been benefited, either in consumption or production, by the improvement.

Experience has not only evolved, but proven, a law in this respect, which is, the more the factory system is perfected, the better will it reward those engaged in it, if not in increased wages to skill, certainly in higher wages to less skill.*

Better morals, better sanitary conditions, better health, better wages,— these are the practical results of the factory system as compared with that which preceded it; and the results of all these have been a keener

* Reybaud, *Cotton*, p. 19.

intelligence. Under the domestic system there existed no common centres of thought and action. Religious bigotry has fought against the new order, because it tends to destroy the power of the church. Association kills such power in time. One of the chief causes of trouble in Ireland, outside land difficulties, is its individual system of labor, which predominates. Fill Ireland with factories, and her elevation is assured; indeed, the north of Ireland, with its linen factories, is prosperous to-day.

The factory brings mental friction, contact, which could not exist under the old system. Take our own factories in New England to-day, fed as they are by foreign operatives. When they go back to their own land, as many do, they carry with them the results, whatever they are, of contact with a new system; and the effects of such contact will tell upon their children, if not upon themselves. The factory brings progress and intelligence. It establishes at the centres the public hall for the lyceum and the concert, and even literary institutions have

been the result of the direct influence of the system.

Such things could not, in the nature of conditions, find a lodgment under the domestic system. It is in evidence that "the book-trade of Great Britain flourishes and fades with its manufactures in vital sympathy, while it is nearly indifferent to the good or bad state of its agriculture."

While the factory system is superior in almost every respect to the individual system, the former is not free from positive evils, because human nature is not perfect. These evils are few compared to the magnitude of the benefits of the system; but they should be kept constantly in mind, that public sentiment may be strong enough some day to remove them,— in fact, it is removing them.

Whatever there was that was good in the old household plan of labor, so far as keeping the family together at all times and working under the care of the head are concerned, was temporarily lost when the factory system took its place, in so far as the

old workers entered the factories. This evil, like most others attendant upon the new order, has been greatly exaggerated. The workers under the old system strenuously opposed the establishment of the new; and this led to the employment of great numbers of parish children, a feature of employment which was eagerly fostered by parish officers. Yet, while the working of young children in mills is something to be condemned in our own time, when it began it placed them in a far better condition than they had ever been in, or could have expected to be in, for it made them self-supporting.

The children have been excluded from the factories in all countries gradually, till the laws of most States, European and American, prohibit their employment under fourteen years of age, except on condition of their attendance at school for a prescribed length of time.

A great evil which even now attracts attention, and in our own country, too, is the employment of married women. This occurs

more generally with foreign women, and too often is the result of the indolence or cupidity of the father. Employers have done much to check this evil, which is not so much an evil to the present as to the future generations. It is bad enough for the present. It robs the young of the care of their natural protectors, it demoralizes the older children, it makes home dreary, and robs it of its amenities. The factory mother's hours of labor in the mills are as long as those of others; and then comes the thousand and one duties of the home in which, although she may be aided by members of the family, there is little rest. No ten-hour law can reach the overworked housewife in any walk of life,— certainly not when she is a factory worker. Her employment in the mills is a crime to her offspring, and, logically, a crime to the State; and the sooner law and sentiment make it impossible for her to stand at the loom, the sooner the character of mill operatives will be elevated. I count their employment, with the consequent train of evils, the worst, and the very worst, of the

evils of a system which is the grandeur of the age in an industrial point of view.

It is gratifying to know that in Massachusetts cotton-mills only about 8 per cent. of the females employed are married women. This is equally true of English factories, and I believe that in both countries the number is gradually decreasing. So, too, the number of operatives who live in individual homes is increasing.

The employment of children is an evil which has been stimulated as much by the actions of parents as by mill owners.

These evils, however, have been the result of development rather than of inauguration, and thus will disappear as education, in its broad sense, takes the place of ignorance.

The evil effects of the kind of labor performed in mills, so far as health is concerned, have been considerable, while less than those attending the household system.

All employments have features not conducive to health. These features or conditions are incidental, and cannot be separated from the employment. In mining

coal, for instance, the nature of the occupation is bad in nearly all respects; but coal must be had, and there is never any lack of miners. What, then, shall be done?

Operators are in duty bound, of course, to make all evils, whether incidental or artificial, as light as possible, and should introduce every improvement which will lighten the burden of any class who, by their mental incapacity or other causes, are content to seek employment in the lowest grades of labor. Machinery is constantly elevating the grades of labor, and the laborer. The working of mines, even, is to-day an easy task compared to what it was a few years ago.

The workers themselves have much responsibility on their own shoulders, so far as the healthfulness or unhealthfulness of an occupation is concerned.

Let the children of factory workers everywhere be educated in the rudiments of sanitary science, and then let law say that bad air shall be prohibited, and I believe the vexed temperance question will not trouble

us to the extent it has. Drunkenness and intemperance are not the necessary accompanying evils of the factory system, and never have been; but, wherever corporations furnish unhealthy home surroundings, there the evils of intemperance will be more or less felt in all the directions in which the results of rum find their wonderful ramifications.

The domestic system of labor could not deal with machinery: machinery really initiated the factory system; that is, the latter is the result of machinery. But machinery has done something more,— it has brought with it new phases of civilization; for, while it means the factory system in one sense, it is the type and representative of the civilization of this period, because it embodies, so far as mechanics are concerned, the concentrated, clearly wrought-out thought of the age. While books represent thought, machinery is the embodiment of thought.

Industry and poverty are not handmaidens; and, as poverty is lessened, good morals thrive. If labor, employment of the mind,

is an essential to good morals, then the highest kind of employment, that requiring the most application and the best intellectual effort, means the best morals. This condition, I take courage to assert, is superinduced eventually by the factory system, for by it the operative is usually employed in a higher grade of labor than that which occupied him in his previous condition. For this reason the present system of productive industry is constantly narrowing the limits of the class that occupies the bottom step of the social order.

One of the inevitable results of the factory is to enable men to secure a livelihood in fewer hours than of old. This is grand in itself; for, as the time required to earn a living grows shorter, our civilization advances. That system which demands of a man all his time for the earning of mere subsistence is demoralizing in all respects.

The fact that the lowest grade of operatives can now be employed in mills does not signify more ignorance, but, as I have said, a raising of the lowest to higher employ-

ments; and, as the world progresses in its refinement, the lowest, which is high comparatively, seems all the lower. Society will bring all up, unless society is compelled to take up what is called a simpler system of labor. We should not forget that growth in civilization means complication, not simplification, nor that the machine is the servant of the workman, and not his competitor.

It is obvious that the factory system has not affected society as badly as has been generally believed; and if it has, in its introduction, brought evils, it has done much to remove others. "The unheard-of power it has given labor, the wealth that has sprung from it, are not the sole property of any class or body of men. They constitute a kind of common fund, which, though irregularly divided," as are all the gifts of nature to finite understandings, "ought at least to satisfy the material and many of the moral wants of society." *

The softening of the misery caused by the change in systems has occurred, but in sub-

* Reybaud, *Cotton*, p. 22.

tle ways. Transition stages are always harsh upon the generation that experiences them. The great point is that they should be productive of good results in the end.

The mind recoils at the contemplation of the conditions which the vast increase of population would have imposed without the factory system.

"It is a sad law, perhaps, but it is an invariable law, that industry, in its march, takes no account of the positions that it overturns nor of the destinies that it modifies. We must keep step with its progress, or be left upon the road. It always accomplishes its work, which is to make better goods at a lower price, to supply more wants, and also those of a better order, not with regard for any class, but having in view the whole human race. Industry is this, or it is not industry. True to its instincts, it has no sentiment in it, unless it is for its own interest; and yet such is the harmony of things, when they are abandoned to their natural course, notwithstanding the selfishness of industry, directed to its own good,

it turns finally to secure the good of all; and, while requiring service for itself, it serves at the same time by virtue of its resources and its power."*

Recent writers, notwithstanding all the facts of history, find a solution for whatever difficulties result from the production of goods under the factory system in the dispersion of congregated labor, and a return to simple methods when they would have the machines owned and manipulated as individual property, under individual enterprise; but it is safe to assert that "a people who have once adopted the large system of production are not likely to recede from it." Labor is more productive on the system of large industrial enterprises: the produce is greater in proportion to the labor employed; the same number of persons can be supported equally well with less toil and greater leisure; and, in the moral aspect of the question, something better is aimed at as the good of industrial improvement than to disperse the workers of society over the

* Reybaud, *Cotton*, p. 13.

earth to be employed in pent-up houses and the sin-breeding small shops of another age, where there would be scarcely any community of interest or necessary mental communion with other human beings. "If public spirit, generous sentiments, or true justice and equality are desired, association, not isolation of interests, is the school in which these excellences are nurtured." *

It is from such influences we discern the elevation of an increased proportion of working people from the position of unskilled to that of skilled laborers, and the opening of an adequate field of remunerative employment to women,— two of the most important improvements which could be desired in the condition of the working classes. Since, therefore, the extension of the factory system tends strongly toward both these results, it may be considered as one of the features of the present age which is the most favorable to their more permanent advancement.†

* Mill's *Political Economy*, vol. ii., pp. 351, 352, fifth London edition.

† Cf. Morrison, *Labor and Capital*, p. 195.

It is also true that the factory system has stamped itself most emphatically upon the written law of all countries where it has taken root, as well as upon the social and moral laws which lie at the bottom of the forces which make written law what it is.

With the exception of laws relating to the purely commercial features of the factory system, the legislation which that system has produced has been stimulated by the evils which have grown with it.

It is the worst phases of society which gauge the legislation requisite for its protection. Laws other than those for the regulation of trade, and the protection of rights as to property, by definition of rights, are made for the restraint of the evil-disposed, and do not disturb those whose motives and actions are right; so, if it were not for the evils which creep into existence with every advance society makes, laws would remain unwritten, because not needed. We have a way of judging by the worst examples.

The social battles which men have fought

have been among the severest for human rights; and they mark eras in social conditions as clearly as do field contests, in which more human lives have been lost, perhaps, but in which no greater human interests have been involved.

At the time of the institution of the factory system, there was upon the statute books of England but few laws relating to master and man. Those which did exist were largely of criminal bearing, establishing punishment for various shortcomings of the men; but, with the coming of the new system, the evils of poor-law abuses came into full view, and, while pauper children were vastly better off in the factories than in the parish poorhouses, they attracted attention, and became the subjects of parliamentary protection. For the first time there appeared some of the consequences of congregated labor, or, rather, the effects of the congregation of one class of labor appeared. A whole generation of operatives was growing up under conditions of comparative physical degeneracy, of mental ignorance,

and moral corruption, all of which existed before, but which the factory system brought into strong light.

And now the great question began to be asked, "Has the nation any right to interfere? Shall society suffer, that individuals may profit?" Shall the next and succeeding generations be weakened morally and intellectually, that estates may be enlarged?

These questions forced themselves upon the public mind, and the fact that pauper apprentices might be better off under such apprenticeship than in the workhouse could have no weight under the influence of the great religious and moral waves which swept over England in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

The result was the factory act of Sir Robert Peel, 1802. While this act was of no great value to the operatives, it was of the greatest value to the world; for it made the assertion, which has never been retracted, that the nation did have the right to check not only open evils, but those which grow

individually through the nature of employment.

As legislation progressed in England, the education of factory children was provided for; so through the factory came public education in England.

The greatest poverty and ignorance prevailed in the agricultural and mining districts of England; and, after the reports of the Poor Laws Commissioners had exposed the demoralizing results of the want of education in the agricultural hamlets, it was really a piece of singular effrontery on the part of the legislators to accuse the manufacturers of being the main authors of the miserable state of affairs found among the tillers of the soil, and to require the employers of factory labor, under heavy penalties, to be responsible for the education of all juvenile operatives whom they employed. Until a recent date, law has insisted upon the education of factory children only, so far as England is concerned; and, whether from good or bad motives in the framers of such laws, the factory system has been made

the central point upon which popular education in England has turned. And this accounts in a large degree for the superior intelligence of the factory population of that country when compared with those engaged in agriculture. In this very direction the influences of the new order of industry upon legislation is clearly marked.

After 1847 the provisions of factory acts were extended first to one industry and then another, until now they comprehend very many of the leading lines of production.

It should be remembered that the abuses which crept into the system in England never existed in this country in any such degree as we know they did in the old country. Yet there are few States in America where manufactures predominate, or hold an important position, that law has not stepped in, and restricted either the hours of labor or the conditions of labor or insisted upon the education of factory children, although the laws are usually silent as to children of agricultural laborers.

Factory legislation in England, as else-

where, has had for its chief object the regulation of the labor of children and women; but its scope has constantly increased, by successive and progressive amendments, until it has attempted to secure the physical and moral well-being of the workman in all trades, and to give him every condition of salubrity and of personal safety in the workshops.

The excellent effect of factory legislation has been made manifest throughout the whole of Great Britain. "Physically, the factory child can bear fair comparison with the child brought up in the fields," and intellectually progress is far greater with the former than with the latter. Public opinion, struck by these results, has demanded the extension of protective measures for children to every kind of industrial labor, until Parliament has brought under the influences of factory laws the most powerful industries.

The conditions belonging to the factory system are constantly forcing themselves into view as the levers which overturn old notions and establish precedents at variance

with the opinion of judges, as is seen in the British legislation as to the liability of employers for damages resulting from accidents.

There is a class of writers who are very fond of drawing comparisons between conditions under the factory system and those which existed prior to its establishment. They refer to the halcyon days of England, and call attention to the English operative working under hand methods as a happy, contented, well-fed, moral person. History teaches just the reverse; for it shows, as has been pointed out, that prior to the establishment of the factory the working classes of England lived in hovels and mud huts that would not be tolerated even in the worst coal-mining districts in this country or in England to-day. The factory graduated all these people from the mud hut. But what was that old system? Degrading, crime-breeding, and productive of intemperance in the worst form as compared with the factory of to-day.

So the whole matter of the consideration

of the workingman to-day becomes intellectual. He is carried onward and upward by the power of mental activity, and cannot be treated separately as one of a class, as he could in the olden time, because in the olden time he was neither a social nor a political factor. Changed conditions in all directions have brought mankind to a new epoch, the distinguishing feature of which is the factory itself, or machinery, which makes it. This, we see, is true when we comprehend that machinery is constantly lifting men out of low into high grades of employment, constantly surrounding them with an intellectual atmosphere, rather than keeping them degraded in the sweat-shop atmosphere of the olden time.

The weal or woe of the operative population depends largely upon the temper in which the employers carry the responsibility intrusted to them. I know of no trust more sacred than that given into the hands of the captains of industry, for they deal with human beings in close relations,— not through the media of speech or exhortation,

but of positive association; and by this they can make or mar. Granted that the material is often poor, the intellects often dull: then all the more sacred the trust and all the greater the responsibility. The rich and powerful manufacturer, with the adjuncts of education and good business training, holds in his hand something more than the means of subsistence for those he employs. He holds their moral well-being in his keeping, in so far as it is in his power to mould their morals. He is something more than a producer: he is an instrument of God for the upbuilding of the race.

Of course, we all know that the condition of the worker is not the ideal one. We all know that every employer who has the welfare of his race at heart, and who is guided by ethical as well as economic motives, would be glad to see his work-people receiving higher pay and living in better houses,— living in an environment which should increase rather than diminish their social force. At the same time, we all recognize that the sanitary and hygienic condition of the fac-

tory is vastly superior to the sanitary and hygienic condition of the homes of the operatives in many cases. When the factory operative in his home reaches the same high grade that has been reached in the factory itself, his social force and life will be increased and his standard raised to a much higher plane. All these things are matters of development; but, when we understand that manufacturers in this country are obliged constantly to deal with a heterogeneous mass, so far as nationality is concerned, while those in other countries deal with a homogeneous mass of operatives, the wonder is that here we have kept the standard so high as it has been. In considering all these aspects as briefly as they have been touched upon, we cannot but feel, as I have indicated, that the factory reaches down and lifts up; that it does not reach up and draw down those who have been raised to a higher standard. This is the real ethical mission of the factory everywhere.

Gentlemen in charge of factories are the managers of great missionary establishments.

In their conduct of them as industrial institutions they must recognize economic laws and conditions. It would be suicidal to take the purely ethical view at the expense of the economic; but, while recognizing the economic conditions which compel certain actions, I believe there is no great difficulty in recognizing also the ethical relations which ought to exist between employer and employé. These ethical relations are becoming more and more a force in the conduct of industry. Whether the new developments of concentrated industrial interests will lead to a still higher recognition of the ethical forces at work is a question which cannot at present be answered. My own belief is that the future developments of industry will be on this line, and that the relation of the employer and his employés will rest upon a sounder basis than heretofore.

The social condition of the workingman and his education, which we have insisted upon, have led him into the strike method as a means of asserting what he calls his

rights. He has in this adopted the worst examples set him by his employers in the past. Greater intelligence, a broader recognition of the necessity of higher social standards, will lead to a recognition of other principles that will enable him to avoid industrial war, and his employer to recognize the intelligence which is willing to avoid it.

This may sound like sentiment. I am willing to call it sentiment; but I know it means the best material prosperity, and that every employer who has been guided by such sentiments has been rewarded twofold,— first, in witnessing the wonderful improvement of his people, and, second, in seeing his dividends increase and the wages of the operatives increase with his dividends.

The factory system of the future will be run on this basis. The instances of such are multiplying rapidly now; and, whenever it occurs, the system outstrips the pulpit in the actual work of the gospel,— that is, in the work of humanity. It needs no gift of prophecy to foretell the future of a system which has in it more possibilities for good

for the masses who must work for day wages than any scheme which has yet been devised by philanthropy alone.

To make the system what it will be, the factory itself must be rebuilt, and so ordered in all its appointments that the great question for the labor reformer shall be how to get people out of their homes and into the factory. The agitation of such a novel proposition will bring all the responsibility for bad conditions directly home to the individual, and then the law can handle the difficulty.

With true men at the head of industrial enterprises, with a political economy which shall recognize the power of moral forces in the accumulation and distribution of wealth, modern productive industry will be not only the most powerful element in civilization, but, as Dr. W. T. Harris has said, "a step in the problem of life." We recognize the truth which underlies this statement, as well as another of his, that "the central fact in civil society is the division of labor." I have considered the factory system, by the

historic and comparative methods, as the supreme material result of the division of labor. The profound philosophy of the results of the division of labor, which involves, of course, the machinery question and the factory system, can receive but passing hints in a limited chapter. The subject is too rich, too vast, too important, for more than suggestive treatment at the present time.

IV

THE ETHICS OF PRISON LABOR.

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NOTWITHSTANDING all the facts, the experience, and the observation which go to prove that civilization has made wonderful advances in almost every direction during the last hundred years or more, the assertion is constantly made that it is an appearance of progress, and not real progress, that attracts public attention; and, however much popular education may be stimulated and supported by public funds, and material prosperity may attend our affairs, and music and art be nearer the common people than ever, nevertheless the pessimist insists that real moral conditions have not changed for the better, that crime increases, that marriages decrease relatively, that vice in great cities is more strongly intrenched than ever. These assertions can be answered in nearly every particular, and in various and con-

vincing ways to any one who is able to see beyond present existing evils.

One of the purposes of this chapter is to answer the charge that progress is apparent, and not real, by citing one phase only of social science,— the condition of prison labor as an index of real moral progress. A little more than a hundred years ago prisoners were either kept in idleness, to the destruction of their moral and physical being, or else were employed in what is known as penal labor. Penal labor had no purpose except as it resulted in a supposed discipline of the prisoner. He was kept at work turning a crank, or in a treadmill, or throwing shot-bags, or doing something else that had no utility whatever as an incentive. It was not productive labor in any sense. It was grinding, demoralizing. It may have had some advantages over idleness in the way of physical exercise; but the mental and moral consequences were such as to quite overcome the physical benefits. Philanthropists, philosophers, penologists, began to see that mere penal labor was not much better than idle-

ness; and some of these men long ago described prison policies that are carried out to-day.

Mabillon, a famous Benedictine monk, Abbé of St. Germain in Paris, and one of the most learned men of the day of Louis XIV., was one of the earliest of those who foreshadowed many of the features of modern prison discipline and of prison labor. In his dissertations he discussed the matter of reformation in prison discipline. He was born in 1632, and died in 1707. It was during the last half of the seventeenth century that he made known his ideas and plans. It was his opinion that penitents might be secluded in cells, like those of the Carthusian monks, and there employed in various sorts of labor. To each cell might be joined a little garden, where at appointed hours the penitents might take an airing and cultivate the ground.

At a time later than that of Mabillon, Clement XI. built a juvenile prison at St. Michael, Rome, over the entrance to which there was placed this inscription: "Clement

XI., Supreme Pontiff, reared this prison for the reformation and education of criminal youths, to the end that those who, when idle, had been injurious to the state, might, when better instructed and trained, become useful to it." This prison was erected in 1704.

Later still, Viscount Vilain XIV., Burgomaster of Ghent, built the celebrated prison of that town, the construction of which has had its influence upon prison building in our time; but the architectural merits of the prison built under his plan are the least to commend it. Dr. F. H. Wines, in his valuable work, *Punishment and Reformation*, gives Vilain the credit of being the father of modern penitentiary science. He made rules for the government of the prison and the organization of labor in it, and realized that in the use of prisoners in productive labor was to be found the primary agency for reformation of criminals. He appreciated the importance, Dr. Wines goes on to say, of the selection of prison industries, choosing, so far as practicable, such as would

come least into competition with free labor on the outside. There was a great diversity of vocations followed in his prison, among which were carding, spinning, weaving, shoemaking, tailoring, carpentry, and the manufacture of wool and cotton cards. He had some purely penal pursuits for disciplinary purposes, and he paid great attention to the classification of prisoners. The prison was opened in the year 1775.

Howard and Beccaria, the first an Englishman and the latter an Italian, living and working in the latter part of the eighteenth century, showed the utility and necessity for labor and the education of convicts.

Thus during the last two centuries the elements underlying what may be called the philosophy or the ethics of prison labor were laid. Penologists, philanthropists, and politicians, not only in the old country, but in this, long ago saw that purely penal labor had no reformatory elements in it, and that convicts must be put upon some practical, productive work, in order best to secure their reformation. At the same time

the State, through its representatives everywhere, felt obliged to so conduct its prison industries as to secure the best returns to the treasury; and until about a quarter of a century ago there was no serious discussion of the systems of labor other than on a treasury basis,— the profits which could be secured to the State by the economic utilization of prison labor.

The great changes which have come in methods during that period,— the last twenty-five years,— by which more sane considerations have been followed, and by which and under which many of the evils in prison discipline have been brought to light, are due primarily to the agitation of the labor reformers; but, like all reforms, the real elements of the question involved soon passed out of the hands of the initiators through the recognition by the public of the crucial principles involved. The labor reformers made their attack along certain restricted lines. They alleged that the employment of convicts in productive industry interfered largely with the rates of wages and with

prices, and hence prison industries were a menace to their welfare. They were never able to make out a very strong case on these lines; but great credit is due them for persisting in their agitation, and thus aiding penologists and philanthropists in calling attention to the greater question of how reformatory measures could be introduced in the conduct of prisons. Thus the prison-labor question became something more than a mere economic one. Here and there prison labor did affect wages and prices, but in all the investigations which I have made on this subject during the last twenty years I have never found much influence in either direction growing out of the employment of prisoners. The question was there, nevertheless, and demanded attention; and it has received it.

Political platforms on this subject were as inconsistent, and even as amusing, as in other directions. Parties would insist in their platforms that the administration should keep the prisoners at work, but in such ways as to relieve outside labor of com-

petition. Such a platform is in line with another, which we have often seen, demanding of administration a reduction in taxation and a liberal expenditure for public uses.

In the first attacks the labor reformers in many places demanded that prisoners should not be employed at all. They soon saw that this would not do,— that taxation for the support of prisons would cost them more than the slight losses they might meet through competition. They further saw that any work done anywhere by any man, whether in or out of prison, was in competition with the work of some other man who wished to perform the same service. They never quarrelled when a large factory of a thousand hands, for instance, was erected in a community; but, when a thousand convicts were set at work, they felt that their employment was a menace to them. The reports that have been published from time to time, both by State governments and by the federal government, have convinced the public that the volume of labor performed in all the prisons of the country was not and could

not be a menace to general industry. Nevertheless, there was enough in it, as I have said, to demand attention; and it has received the most thoughtful consideration of those men who are anxious not only to preserve and strengthen economic conditions, but to adopt those reformatory measures which shall in the end prove of the greatest advantage to society at large.

It was natural that the employment of prisoners should assume various forms, and hence we have half a dozen systems of prison labor. These have been known generally as the Contract System, the Piece Price System, the Lease System, and the Public Account System. Mr. Victor H. Olmsted, one of the statistical experts of the United States Department of Labor, in making up a digest of convict labor laws in force in the United States at the present time for the use of the Industrial Commission, has very properly classified the various systems authorized by statutes for the employment of convicts into two groups, as follows: —

First, systems under which the product

or profits of the convicts' labor is shared by the State with private individuals, firms, or corporations. Under this group three distinct systems are authorized, known respectively as the Contract System, the Piece Price System, and the Lease System.

Second, systems under which convicts are worked wholly for the benefit of the State or its political subdivisions or public institutions. Under this group he classes three systems, also authorized by statutes, known as the Public Account System, the State Use System, and the Public Ways and Works System.

All these systems or methods of employing convicts have been discussed over and over again, their advantages and disadvantages considered, and their effect upon the treasury, upon the convict, and upon what is known as free labor. In fact, all the elements concerning the employment of convicts have received very great attention, not only from members of prison associations, but from legislators, economists, and sociologists everywhere.

Looking back to the sentiments announced by the men cited at the beginning of this chapter, who may be denominated the pioneers in advanced thought relative to discipline in prisons and the employment of inmates, it is found that at the present day there have been modifications which lead to conclusions entirely different from those which formed the basis of statutory provisions a quarter of a century ago. These modifications have come through experience and enlightenment. We have all changed our views more or less. Personally, I am very glad to say that, while studying this question of prison labor officially for more than a score of years, I have seen the changes which have caused me to enlarge my ideas in some respects, to modify them in others. Contact with a system, practical observation of it or any phase of it, are instructive and broadening. We all remember how every one — especially in the north — at all interested in penology and the effects of prison labor would condemn in most unmitigated terms the Lease System of the South.

At the same time, they praised the Contract System, which prevailed generally in northern prisons. Afterwards we all began to condemn the Contract System; while the labor and prison reformers in the South, in beginning to condemn their own system, demanded the application of the Contract System of the North. The enlightening influence of knowledge in this respect was well illustrated during the session of the National Prison Association at Atlanta in 1886. During that session the prison authorities of Georgia invited the members of the association to inspect a convict camp. It was my pleasure to be one of the party. Going out on the train, one could hear only general condemnation of the Southern system. Coming back to the city, the remark was frequently made, and by some of the most distinguished penologists of the country, that they had seen a great light; that the employment of the class of prisoners which prevailed most generally in the South must, for a time, be under the odious Lease System, for it furnished them with outdoor work, and at the

same time helped the treasury. It would have been insane on the part of the Southern authorities to have placed the negro convicts, especially, in such prison constructions as we have in the North. It was made plain to the Northern visitors that any such course would have resulted in an enormous death-rate, without any substantial economic results. They found that the Southern authorities regretted the necessity of the Lease System; that, after the war, when the Southern States were obliged to take care of a large class of criminals that had been dealt with in different ways prior thereto, they were compelled to resort to the most primitive methods of employing them. So the Lease System was really a valuable suggestion at the time. It is outgrowing its usefulness. The evils of it have proved greater than its advantages, and the Southern authorities are considering this question of prison labor along broader and more enlightened lines. I refer to this simply to show how any great question changes with the conditions accompanying

it, and with the thought and study of its students.

The Contract System was and is probably the best for the treasury, but for reformatory purposes it lacks the elements of control. The facts shown by investigation prove that, on the whole, and without regard to systems, all prisons are run at a loss to the State; and the conclusion has been forced upon the public mind that, if thousands of dollars have to be paid for the support of prisons, and the return for labor is not more than from 50 to 75 per cent. of the cost, prison labor might as well be turned into reformatory measures as to be used simply for any profit it brings to the treasury. This is the greatest advance in the prison-labor question, — the ignoring of the treasury, except incidentally, and the adaptation of the work and the education of convicts to the very best results to the individual inmate. Hence the Contract System had to go, and with it the Piece Price System, which was only a modification of it. I need not dwell upon the evils of the Contract System,— which

was once thought, on the whole, the very best that could be adopted,—for we all know them.

The crude State Account System, under which goods were made in the prisons, under the control of the prison authorities, instead of under outside contractors and the superintendence of outside instructors, and sold for the benefit of the treasury, seemed at one time to offer a fair solution of the difficulties; but this system proved insufficient, for it was soon found that goods made by convicts, and at the cost of the State as a manufacturer, were sold on the market without any very great regard to market prices. And thus this system left a greater impression upon outside industry than the Contract System itself; at least, this was so in theory, and it proved so in practice in many instances. Yet the Public Account System had in it reformatory elements which were not found in either the Lease or the Contract System.

The next step in the evolution was a natural one, and one against which many

objections were raised, and in carrying out which some serious obstacles seemed to exist. This step was the application of what is properly called the State Use System, a phase of the Public Account System of employing prisoners. Under this system prisoners were to be engaged in the manufacture of things to be used by the prison itself, and by other State or public institutions. It is curious to note how rapidly this idea has been adopted by State governments and by the United States government. The English prisons gave the results of some experience in utilizing prisoners on public works, and this led to the partial adoption of the system of employing convicts in the manufacture of things which the State itself could use.

The history of the adoption of the State Use System in this country becomes interesting at this point. Broadly, this system is, as already intimated, the Public Account System in all respects, except that the products of the convicts' labor manufactured from raw materials purchased by the institu-

tions, and under the sole direction of prison officials, or produced in agricultural or other employments, are used in the penal, reformatory, or other public institutions instead of being sold to the general public.

Twenty-eight States of the Union provide for the Contract System, six for the Piece Price System, twenty-five for the Lease System, forty-seven States and Territories, including the District of Columbia, for the Public Account System, and twenty-four for the State Use features of the Public Account System. In some of the States providing for the State Use System there is still provision for the use of the Contract System, and even for other phases of the different systems; but, directing our consideration now specifically to the State Use System, it is found that the first State in the Union to provide for it was Nevada, by an act of the legislature approved Feb. 28, 1887. Nevada did not adopt the broad State Use System as it is now conducted in some States; but it provided that State prison convicts engaged in the manufacture of boots and

shoes should make all the boots and shoes required for the use of the inmates of the prison and by wards of the State and other institutions, to be paid for by such institutions. By later acts, the State required the employment of its convicts in preparing stone and other materials for use in the construction of public buildings.

The next State to indulge in any legislation upon this new system was Massachusetts, by an act approved June 16, 1887, in which act it is provided that,—

"The general superintendent shall, as far as may be, have manufactured in the State prison, reformatories, and houses of correction such articles as are in common use in the several State and county institutions. He shall, from time to time, notify the officers of such institutions having charge of the purchase of supplies of such goods as he has remaining in hand; and said officers shall, as far as may be, purchase of said articles as are necessary to the maintenance of the institutions which they may represent. The articles manufactured in said prison,

reformatory, or house of correction shall be sold at the wholesale market price of goods of like kind and grade."

The legislation of other States providing for the application of the State Use System was secured at later periods, mostly since 1890, although some of them passed laws in 1888 and 1889. The States now providing for the State Use System, or some general feature of it, are Arkansas, California, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. The United States government, by acts passed in 1894–95, provides that convicts in the United States penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., shall be employed exclusively in the manufacture and production of articles and supplies for the penitentiary and for the government.

There are other States which adopt the State Use principle in the employment of

convicts in quarrying and preparing stone for the building of roads and upon public works, thus recognizing the principle involved. These States are Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, New Mexico, South Dakota, Oregon, and Virginia.

It is not necessary for the purposes of this chapter to discuss the experience of all the above-mentioned States that have adopted the State Use plan, even if the information for such discussion were at hand. The information is not at hand, for there has been no general investigation covering all the States; but we may learn of the value of this system by looking to the experience of Massachusetts and New York, two States which have felt the effects of the agitation of the prison-labor question as much as any other State, and more than most of them.

Under the law of Massachusetts already quoted, passed in June, 1887, that State had no experience. Her experience has been under the act of 1898, providing for the employment of prisoners in making goods for public institutions. New York's expe-

rience has been under the law of 1896, which authorizes the employment of convicts in State prisons, penitentiaries, jails, and reformatories in the production of commodities for use in any public institution in the State, such commodities to be paid for thereby. In the application of the State Use System, therefore, New York has had a longer experience than Massachusetts. The new constitution of the State of New York, which went into effect Jan. 1, 1895, provides that, on and after the first day of January in the year 1897, no person in any prison, penitentiary, jail, or reformatory shall be required or allowed to work, while under sentence thereto, at any trade, industry, or occupation wherein or whereby his work, or the product or profit of his work, shall be farmed out, contracted, given, or sold to any person, firm, association, or corporation; but this section, by specific language in the constitution, is not to be construed to prevent the legislature from providing that convicts may work for, and that the products of their labor may be disposed

of to, the State or any political division thereof, or for or to any public institution owned or managed and controlled by the State or any political division thereof.

The State Use System is therefore the system of New York, both by constitutional and statutory provision. The failure or the success of this system in these two States (New York and Massachusetts) must be taken as indicative of the failure or success in the other States that provide for it; for the obstacles and the disadvantages, as well as the advantages, of the system are on trial there more perfectly, probably, than in any other Commonwealth.

The first obstacle or disadvantage to the State Use System which suggested itself to the minds not only of those who were thoroughly in favor of it, but of its opponents, related to the volume of demand by State institutions for prison-made goods. It was assumed by many, and with considerable reason, that the number of convicts available for the production of goods needed by the State would be vastly in excess of the de-

mand therefor. The fallacy in the reasoning of the advocates of the system consisted in a lack of real conception of the relation of producers to consumers. It was loosely argued that the prisoners would consume what they made.

By the census of 1890 there was one producer of manufactured goods to 14 of the population. This statement involves all manufactured products, whether consumed in this country or exported. Taking a single industry, that of men's clothing, it is found that there was one producer to 248 of the population. Calculations based on the actual needs of some States showed that, in supplying those needs, only a small proportion of the prisoners would be required. This caused apprehension that many prisoners would have to be kept in idleness. Fortunately for the system, this objection, it is now thought, can be overcome, and, in fact, has been partially overcome in two ways: New York has solved the problem, if it can be solved so far as this particular objection is concerned, first, by providing that the

product of prisons may be used in supplying all State institutions and those of any political division, thus broadening the real market for prison-made goods on the basis of the State Use plan; second, by the introduction of methods of technical and trade education, such methods to be applied whenever and wherever there are any idle prisoners competent to be instructed under the system.

Massachusetts has sought to solve this problem, following the obstacle named,— that is, lack of demand,— by providing in the preliminary stages of the system that, if goods are manufactured beyond the demand, they may be sold in the market under certain restrictions, and by allowing the Contract System to prevail for a while. The law under which the State Use System is applied in Massachusetts was passed April 14, 1898; and this law declares that it shall be the duty of the general superintendent of prisons to cause to be produced, so far as possible, in the State prison, the reformatories, the State farm, and the jails and houses of correction articles and materials

used in the several public institutions of the Commonwealth and of the counties thereof. It gives the managers of the different institutions controlled by the State or the counties the right to purchase their supplies of outside producers, provided they cannot be supplied by the prisons; but it introduces a very severe check on any pretence that they cannot be supplied by the prisons by specifying that no bills for articles or materials named in the list which the general superintendent is obliged to furnish all institutions in the State or counties purchased otherwise than from a prison shall be allowed or paid unless the bill is accompanied by a certificate from the general superintendent that such goods could not be supplied upon requisition of the prisons. So, if articles or materials are not on hand in the prison storehouses, and are needed for immediate use, the superintendent shall at once notify the officer making requisition that the same cannot be filled; and then, and then only, can the articles or materials be purchased elsewhere. The particular fault of the law is that it does

not provide that all institutions in any political division — those less than counties — are to be supplied in the way provided for State and county institutions. The New York law is much better in this respect.

To learn how far this question of demand and supply offers any obstacle to the success of the State Use System, we must consult the facts alone. Theories and wishes and views are of no account. The superintendent of prisons of New York states that the system is working fairly well in this respect. During a recent fiscal year there was a decrease in Sing Sing shipments of over $113,500 and an increase in the shipments from Auburn and Clinton of nearly $36,000, or a net decrease for all of nearly $67,000. The causes contributing to the decrease at Sing Sing are to be found in the fact that in 1897 and 1898 large quantities of supplies were made there for the national guard. The attorney-general held that the guard is, under the special law governing it, exempt from the provisions of the law requiring purchases to be made of the prison ; so Sing

Sing is doing no work for the national guard, that not being considered a State institution in the interpretation the attorney-general puts upon the present law.

During the same year, 1897–98, $50,000 worth of street-brooms were shipped to the city of New York; but at present none are being shipped to the city, as the State commissioner of prisons assigned the street-broom industry to the Kings County Penitentiary, and the brooms for New York City are now made at that institution. The result of this was that a thoroughly organized, instructive, and prosperous industry, which during the previous year was worked to its full capacity, later on practically did nothing. Another reason for the decrease in demands upon the Sing Sing industries was the establishment in several State hospitals and other charitable institutions of plants for the manufacture of their own supplies in the way of boots, shoes, clothing, etc. The industries at Auburn and Clinton prisons are such that they have not been so seriously affected by the causes just enumerated, and thus each

of these prisons shows a slight increase in shipments.

Varying demand for supplies and difficulties in selecting industries belong to this feature of the system; but, with the extension of the supplies under the New York law to municipal as well as to State and county institutions, these difficulties are likely to disappear. Already the demand for school furniture from Auburn has been nearly doubled, while from another institution it has increased nearly 50 per cent. The superintendent for New York reports that in some kinds of supplies the requisitions have much exceeded the capacity of such industries for production, this being true in respect to underwear, hosiery, blankets, and school and office furniture. Some other kinds of manufactures have been for a season very active in meeting the actual demands, but the requisitions diminish in some degree and at times.

Of course, there is great difficulty in selecting the right kind of industries. The short experience of two years in New York,

however, has demonstrated that bottom facts need to be studied and thoroughly digested in selecting and organizing an industry for permanent use in the prisons. These facts indicate that the quality and quantity of the supplies required shall be satisfactory; that the prisons shall manufacture the supplies successfully at market prices; that the demand for the goods shall be permanent; that the amount of such supplies consumed shall maintain such demand for them that their production will furnish employment for a sufficient number of prisoners to insure earnings to meet the fixed charges of the industry,— the compensation of instructors, foremen, officers, and the incidental expenses,— and also afford a reasonable return to the State for the labor of the convicts; that such production, furthermore, shall not excessively compete with free labor or to its detriment. These complex demands, which necessarily enter into the choice of an industry, make the exercise of the most careful and discreet judgment of prison authorities vital in organizing, adjusting, and operating in-

dustries, so that successful production shall not outrun the demand for the supplies.

Thus it is seen that the prison authorities of New York are thoroughly alive to this very question, constituting the first obstacle that has been met in establishing the State Use System. All the obstacles were suggested many years ago by Sir Edmund DuCane, one of the highest authorities in the world on prison labor.

The experience of Massachusetts has been practically that of New York, but it is in a way fairly to meet the demand. When it extends the system, as already intimated, to municipalities, as can be done under the New York law, it is believed the obstacle now being treated will be overcome.

The second obstacle which has been raised to this system relates to the variety of goods needed by State institutions, it being feared that the labor of the prisons is not of sufficient skill to produce everything that may be needed. This was also one of DuCane's chief objections to a system which he thoroughly favored, and there is something in it.

Nevertheless, with the attachment to the system of methods of technical and trade education, there is no reason why nearly all, if not all, the supplies required by public institutions cannot be produced.

If at any time the reader should be in Albany, it is suggested that he go to the Capitol and visit the office of the superintendent of prisons of the State of New York. There he will see a room finished in beautifully carved panels of quartered oak. The workmanship is fine, the designs beautiful, and the room as handsome as any that can be found in a public building; yet the carving was all done by the prisoners at Sing Sing, worked out to a plan of matching, and the pieces shipped to Albany, where they were put in place by workmen of that city. It is an illustration of the effect of the efforts to educate prisoners in high-grade work. Of course, the superintendent would not have fitted up this beautiful room had it not been for the fact that he wished to illustrate by this object-lesson the results of the educational side of the system.

Dr. Brockway, late of the Elmira Reformatory, gives much information relative to the results of technical and trade education as carried on in the magnificent institution under his charge. The work has been carried so far there that that prison has been denominated a great technical university. In this lies the solution, probably, of the question relating to variety of products. Time must be given the system to demonstrate its fullest utility, but only in the education of convicts can the obstacle relating to variety be fully overcome. Without it, it can only be partially overcome.

The third obstacle is one of sentiment, purely and simply. Army officers in Germany have objected to their commands wearing uniforms made in prisons. Militia officers in this country have offered the same objection, yet they are glad to sleep under blankets that are made by the prisoners; and I have been informed that samples of uniforms made in prison, even for officers' wear, are superior to those usually furnished by the State through the

ordinary method of contract with outside manufacturers. This obstacle will pass away in time. It is not one that will effectually block the progress of the State Use System. It has been effective in some respects, but it is believed that the objection is purely temporary in its working.

The above are the main reasons which have been offered why the State Use System should not be adopted. As already stated, at one time they had some weight; but now, in the light of practical experience, short as it has been, they have no very great weight. Certainly, the advantages of the system in great measure offset the disadvantages or objections. There are no permanent disadvantages to the system. There are only temporary obstacles. The advantages are, that the system makes the least possible impression upon the rates of wages and the prices of goods. To be sure, the amount of products of the prisons consumed by the State or any of its institutions reduces the products of outside establishments *pro tanto;* but there is no impression upon the vital

elements of industry outside,— prices and wages,— and it is conceded by all that the prisoners must be kept employed if any reformatory measures are to be adopted.

The workingmen, who found much fault with the Contract System, are almost universally satisfied with the working of the modern system, as are also the manufacturers, who do not have to compete with a producer not obliged to consider cost in fixing prices. If this satisfaction becomes general, our legislatures will be relieved of great pressure from two avenues of approach. The paid lobbyist of the contractor will not be found in the lobbies of the legislature, nor will the committees of labor unions be found antagonizing them. The subject itself will also be eliminated from public discussion in large measure. Politics will interfere now and then; and in some States where the State Use System has been adopted it will be abolished, and older methods, or something more injurious, be resorted to as a makeshift.

One of the most powerful reasons for the

introduction of the State Use System is that under it machinery is not employed to any great extent. The use of machinery, the making of the prison a factory for the rapid production of goods, was one of the most aggravating sources of annoyance to the workingman. The use of hand machines, or the production of goods by hand, reduces this cause of attack to its minimum. At the same time, it enables the prison authorities to keep the prisoners themselves almost constantly occupied in producing the goods required of them. It also has an educational benefit that must be fully considered and appreciated. If technical and trade education is to accompany or become a part of the State Use System, hand-labor methods must be utilized to the fullest extent. Of course, in the production of some goods, or in the preparation of the raw material for some of them, machinery must be used, as, for instance, in the carding of wool for hand-woven blankets and other goods. The setting up of much powerful machinery in a State prison will be avoided.

The remunerative character of the State Use System has been well exemplified in the experience of both Massachusetts and New York; and, on the whole, the effect upon the treasuries of these States has been as satisfactory as, if not more so than, under the Contract System. The testimony of Mr. Pettigrove, the general superintendent of prisons of Massachusetts, is to this effect. With the small working capital appropriated by the legislature, he has been able to establish the industries called for by the law, and to conduct them in such a way as to meet some of the financial objections to the State Use System.

In addition to the testimony of the prison officials, or those immediately connected with the administration of the law relative to the State Use System in New York and Massachusetts, we have the testimony of several legislative committees appointed to investigate different prison systems, and to make recommendations to their respective legislatures. Attention will be called to but two of these, and first

to that of the Pennsylvania Legislative Committee, acting under authority of the law of May 21, 1895, and resolutions of July 26, 1897. This committee, of which Hon. Jacob Krouse, of Philadelphia, was chairman, submitted a report adopted Dec. 20, 1898. In this report the committee say — and the report is understood to be unanimous, and was made after the members had familiarized themselves with the systems of convict labor prevailing in Pennsylvania and other States — that from the information obtained there was one gleam of light, and that was exhibited by the State of New York. The committee might have added, had they made the report a few months later, that there was light also from other States. They stated that, prior to the present law of New York, that State had been a producer, manufacturer, and seller of commodities in the open market, competing with other makers of the same products, but that by the constitutional provision the State enforced a mandatory clause which would have thrown every one of her convicts into a state

of idleness except for a suggestion which seemed to afford a solution of the difficulty. That suggestion, which the committee state was exactly in line with one which they had made to the legislature of their State in a report of 1897, related to the labor of prisoners for the benefit of charitable, benevolent, and political institutions which the State controlled or supported either in whole or in part. After examining this system, the committee concluded, after a laborious investigation from all sides of the present system prevailing in the State of New York, and its applicability to Pennsylvania, that there appears to be no objection offered to it from any source. The committee had before them very many prison officials, and gathered a large amount of testimony; and they found that the unanimity with which the State institutions of Pennsylvania gave their assent to the new plan of operations was remarkable. They found that the New York prisons were enabled to employ their inmates, and to teach new trades to such of them as were willing to learn; that the

State-supported institutions get their wants supplied with the best quality of goods, at prices satisfactory to them; that whatever economies or earnings may result are fully realized by the State, and the State alone, without any injury to or complaint from the representatives of labor outside, and, further, with their acquiescence. The committee, therefore, reported a bill providing for the production in the several prisons of goods required by all State-supported institutions. This is the testimony of a most industrious committee after long and patient investigation.

New York has also had its legislative committee investigating this subject; and its chairman, Hon. F. R. Peterson, made a report on the subject of prison labor. The resolution of the assembly appointing this committee instructed its members particularly to inquire into the effect of the present, or the State Use System of convict labor upon free labor. The general conclusions of the committee were as follows: —

1. That the present system has not yet

succeeded in furnishing employment for all the convicts in State prisons.

2. That the financial results are as yet inadequate and unsatisfactory.

3. That the labor classes of the State are not at the present time suffering from the competition of convict labor, as the same is carried on in the prisons and penal institutions of the State.

4. That the unsatisfactory results up to the present time will be, in some degree, obviated by greater experience and organization.

5. That the principle of the greatest diversification of industries, coupled with a complete supply for the special market for any line of goods manufactured, will best preserve the laboring classes from convict competition in the future.

6. That the industries in the penitentiaries, and marketing of the products, should be placed under the same control as industries in the State prisons.

7. That the cell systems of the three State prisons should be rebuilt by convict

labor, and also that a new wall should be constructed at Sing Sing in the same manner.

8. That the policy of prohibiting by legislative enactment the employment of convicts upon certain industries should be discountenanced; and, generally, that if the present system be carried out faithfully and intelligently, and without interference, it will demonstrate within a few years the wisdom of those who caused its adoption, and will prove a better system of convict labor than has ever before been employed in this State.

With the experience which has been outlined, and the testimony of the committees referred to, there is, nevertheless, some grumbling or condemnation of the system; but this condemnation, it seems to me, results from a lack of understanding of the system and its workings. There will be deficits here and there, a decrease in the demand for goods sometimes, and other difficulties that will have to be met by legislatures and by prison officers. One way of meeting the objection relative to the non-employment of

a portion of the prisoners relates to the use of them in the reclamation of waste lands by trenching or reforestization, where such things can be carried on; to the building of canals and roads, and other public works; and to the utilization of prisoners in preparing material by hand labor for the many purposes of the State. These supplementary provisions will probably result in overcoming all the obstacles that are now raised against the State Use System, the general adoption of which is still a matter which experience alone can determine. Such experience must be secured under varying conditions, and to such extent as will demonstrate the practicability of the new methods.

I have purposely avoided discussing at length the merits and demerits of other systems than the State Use System, and have made no attempt whatever at being consistent with what I may have stated in the past in any place or in any official report. Nevertheless, it is gratifying to find, on consulting articles and reports which I have written, that I am not very

inconsistent after all, for in 1879 I recommended to the Massachusetts legislature the enactment of laws looking to the production in the prisons of the State of all goods required by them or by any department of the State; that the greatest diversity of employment consistent with the capacity of the prisoners be insisted upon, and that, whenever possible, farms be carried on by the prison administration for the supplying of institutions; and, again, in 1880, that the use of all power machinery be prohibited in prison shops, and the convicts employed upon hand work, as upon hand-made boots and shoes, hand-woven goods for prison wear, and other State purposes; and, further, that all idea of making prisons self-supporting be abandoned, and the convicts be taught to turn their hands to any trade requiring skill and training. Nevertheless, in the study of the subject of prison labor for more than a score of years, I have, with all other students of the same subject, been willing to abandon some no-

tions, to modify some views, and to accept the results of practical experience.

Under the agitation, the idea has grown that the convict or the criminal should be treated from the physician's point of view,— as a man morally sick, restricted in his liberty for the sake of society, but, while being restricted, given the best possible opportunity for moral development and also for the development of his working powers, so that when he is freed he may take up self-sustaining work as a good citizen of the community.

This state of affairs shows the remarkable changes in prison discipline and the development of the prisoner, and is one of the strongest answers to the allegation that progress is apparent and not real. Here is a concrete illustration of the real moral and economic progress. Now, instead of the old degrading conditions, in all prisons everywhere civilized governments are conducting prison industries in such a way as to leave the least impression on prices and wages. They are

recognizing the force of the suggestion that it is the interest of labor and capital to reduce the number of prisoners as an initiative to means of greater reform; that they must so deal with criminals as to effect a cure of moral maladies; that prisons should be conducted in the interest of the prisoners and of society primarily, and that the interest of the treasury should be only incidental to the best effect upon the prisoners themselves and upon the community.

With these comments, I may be indulged in stating a few conclusions, although the facts which lead to all of them have not been discussed in this paper. These conclusions are: —

1. That it is wisest to conduct prison industries in such a way as to leave the least impression on prices and the rates of wages.

2. That for incorrigibles and recidivists that form of labor should be adopted which requires the largest expenditure of muscle in proportion to the cost of raw materials and the least outlay of capital.

3. That there is not so much reformable material in prisons as philanthropists and others would have us believe.

4. That very many persons now sent to prison by the courts should be sent to insane asylums, or institutions for the treatment of the feeble-minded.

5. That it is the interest of labor and capital to reduce the number of prisoners rather than constantly to attack the systems of prison labor.

6. That in the conduct of prisons and the employment of prisoners the physician's point of view should be followed; that is, the cure of moral maladies in State prisons, as well as the cure of mental and physical maladies in other institutions, should be the basis of management.

7. That in the employment of convicts the effect upon the treasury should be incidental to the best effect upon the prisoners themselves and upon the community at large.

8. That it is wise to let the system now on trial in the States that have provided for

it — the State Use System — alone until it can be fully tried, and determined whether it involves the very best elements of reformation, remuneration, and the constant and healthy employment of the convicts.

9. That the State should always conduct its prisons and employ its prisoners in such a way that the individual shall not be degraded.